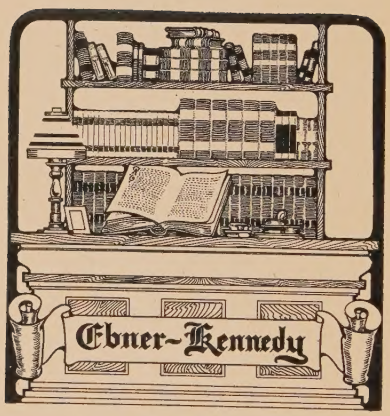
The Intuition of the Will

By

Ernest Wood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Ernest Wood

Author of Concentration, The Seven Rays, etc.

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Chapter I

THE THREE NECESSITIES OF MAN

When God at first made man,
Having a glass of blessings standing by—
Let us (said He) pour on him all we can;
Let the world's riches, which dispersed lie,
Contract into a span.

So strength first made a way,
Then beauty flow'd, then wisdom, honor, pleasure:
When almost all was out, God made a stay,
Perceiving that, alone of all His treasure,
Rest in the bottom lay.

For if I should (said He)
Bestow this jewel also on My creature,
He would adore My gifts instead of Me,
And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature:
So both should losers be.

Yet let him keep the rest,
But keep them with repining restlessness;
Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
May toss him to My breast.

Herbert

Human Dignity and Human Desire

Men are mostly inarticulate. They attend lectures and read books, to find their own thoughts. They cannot tell themselves what they want, until a thinker comes along and proclaims to them their opinion or desire, but then they instantly recognize and claim it as their own. In his secret soul every man feels himself adequate to anything—no action or thought

is too good to be his. He is god; he is proprietor of everything; he can never quite understand why he cannot enter into possession—it seems that somehow he ought to be able to, that he can but he cannot, like a person who has a name on the tip of his tongue but cannot remember it.

Allied to this feeling also is that perpetual surprise and indignation which men feel when the world maltreats them. They know they are gods, and instinctively expect recognition and divine honors. Hence also their lack of surprise when a big legacy or other good fortune comes their way; it seems quite proper that it should do so, and it is accepted without any sense of injustice.

Some philosophers complain against the fractiousness of this creature, and tell him to be humble and thankful and to recognize himself for the bit of mud that he is; but I like and honor him for this dignity, which so unmistakably announces his divinity.

Man opens his eyes and says "mine." The whole universe, everything, everybody, is taken into possession in one magnificent gesture. With what royalty, what cool insouciance, the baby closes his funny little fingers upon what he wants, and casts down what he does not want; with what confidence the growing boy demands his dinner! Children who have been kindly treated easily stare us battered elders out of countenance. It is only in process of time and experi-

ence that they gradually lose this sense of ownership, and find it supplanted by desire. But this desire also proclaims our divinity and immortality,—for a pig does not want a parlor, and beings must follow their own nature.

I Want the World

The first of these desires of man is the demand to be master of the world. What a procession of explorers and inventors has graced the pages of history; all seeking, often at the risk of life and limb, to satisfy this cry "I want the world." A man's senses go forth like the couriers of a powerful king, and bring to his castle news from the most distant parts, so that he has in his consciousness, brought together in one scene, the sun or the stars and the grass at his feet. Then comes reason, like a supplementary sense, to discover for him what the senses cannot see—that the earth is a rotating ball, that there is electricity, gravitation, the atom, the electron. The same reason which adds to the senses and increases our knowledge of the world, lends its powerful aid also to our hands and feet, and plans for the creation of accessory limbs in the form of tools, machinery and engines, motor cars, trains, ships and aircraft.

The power of reason has grown in man to meet this need of his for mastery of the world, so that in time this creature, less favored than others with

natural clothing, or weapons, or instinct, has extended his dominion over the earth, has clothed himself for every climate, and provided himself with invincible weapons and tools. Other creatures must journey to the water, but this wonderful being has made the water flow into his own house; they must travel with the wind, but he uses the wind to advance into its face.

And while all this has been taking place man has developed the powers of his consciousness by use, so that its grasp is now great. His hand has ceased to grow larger, but his mind has expanded, so that he may have at any moment a vision of large and complicated reality. His gradual mastery over the world through the use of his powers thus involves his mastery also over the subjective regions of the mind.

I Want You

The second great desire of man is for the presence of others. Because of this propinquity constantly produces love. Men who work together in prospecting camps, or as soldiers in the same platoon, form most sacred friendships, though in the beginning their association was for individual material gain. They started with the idea "I want the world," but now they add to it "I want you." A story is told of two soldiers who could not meet without fighting, until their commanding officer hit upon the following plan: He set

the two men to wash a long row of barrack windows, one on the outside and the other on the inside. They started by glaring at each other through the glass, but by the time they had reached the seventeenth window they were laughing heartily at the joke played upon them, and when they reached the end they shook hands and afterwards remained great friends.

There is also something more than what is called sex instinct in the young man who says to the maiden, "I want you." A little child manifests the same desire when it has discovered the moon among the trees, or some new variety of spider or beetle, and it rushes to its mother or nurse and drags her to the spot to look also. Its satisfaction is not complete without this sharing of experience, this sense of another consciousness. So the love of the mother is not all on one side, it has its reciprocal in the child.

The desire "I want you" is the source and foundation of love in all the varied forms in which it appears —as friendship, sympathy, kindness, reverence. It covers an enormous range, from the refinements of human cruelty to the worship of God. Among the sights of New Orleans is a house in which a certain French noblewoman lived in the old slave days. This building caught fire, and the firemen found that the top floor was fitted up with instruments of torture, such as were used by the Inquisition. This dreadful woman had been in the habit of torturing slaves in

order to enjoy their suffering. Horrible as the whole thing was, it was nevertheless a manifestation of this human desire. She could not be happy without taking others into account. It would have been no pleasure to torment a log of wood. Even in such cruelty as this there are the beginnings of brotherhood. In this, as in the more beautiful manifestations of this desire, there is a demand for something quite different from material things. It cannot be said that man in all these cases is merely wanting animate material things around him, in addition to inanimate objects of the world. He wants to feel the living consciousness of others. He is saying: "I want you."

The phenomena of human cooperation and brotherhood tell us that this human contact is a necessity of the soul, as food is requisite for the body. The instinct of love is by no means artificial or unwarranted, from the standpoint of the mind or soul. Just as day by day we all enjoy parks, gardens, roads and the fruits of the earth, the loom and the printing-press, to such an extent that our lives, except for their animal basis, may be said to be composed from these, so, save for the mere rudiments of mental and moral faculty, our minds are composed of the digested essence of the thoughts and feelings of others. Without these two classes of things—the forms and the lives around us —we should be lower than the animals, for we have long ago lost our natural instincts, such as that which

informs a bird hatched from an incubator what is food and what is not, and how to build its nest.

I Want to Get Somewhere

The third great desire of man is to fulfil himself. He wants the fulness of freedom, which involves much more than control of passing material things. The rich man has nearly always a sense of something missing. To move among his treasures and exercise his material freedom in travel, or in the use of books, theatres and society, leaves him deeply conscious that there is something wrong. The poor are often without this sense of want, because, it is said, they must work, and in work there is solace. The village blacksmith enjoyed his night's repose, because he had the sense of something accomplished, something done. But this satisfaction will not bear close examination; it has not the ring of sterling human metal. The pleasure, which is enjoyed because it is felt to be the reward of work and is not in the work itself, indicates nothing more than that a sop has been thrown to the dogs of discontent which howl and bark within us. But man is a king in his own divine right, and has no need to justify his existence. He is apologetic because he feels unfulfilled, that in a sense he is not really himself, but only a sketch of himself. If he were himself he would acknowledge no necessity or dependence.

The independence of man is well founded, for character begins when necessity leaves off. A man achieves some satisfaction in sports and games, because the circumstances call out his powers. It is the same in business; almost every man uses his will and intelligence in the affairs of his office, or store, or workshop; but usually he undertakes that business solely because he must; he does it for the sake of daily bread, for himself and his wife and family. Men also rise to great heights in special emergencies; as for example in the Great War, when thousands who commonly lived like rabbits in their suburban warrens surprised themselves by showing latent funds of grit and valor, and even men from the jails performed deeds of the greatest heroism out of love for their stricken comrades.

But when we do what we must it is no credit to us. Even the fact that we rise to emergencies does not yet mark us out as men of character, though it is a promise that we shall be such some day. If it requires special conditions to call out our best we are not yet ready to make our mark on the world. We should do our best without waiting for circumstances to invoke it. A true man is master of himself, so that he acts from his own will, and when he pulls the levers all the powers of thought and feeling stand to attention and perform the work assigned to them.

Everyone has some inkling of a great destiny. So no man is really contented with the common round, the daily routine. All cry out: "Why this perpetual round? I want to get somewhere." Healthy people, viewing the future, do not like the idea of personal annihilation. Huxley, writing to Lord Morley, said that the older he became the less he liked the idea that he would know less about the world in 1900 than he had known as a child; he even preferred the prospect of the upper regions of hell, where the climate and the company might not be too trying. But healthy minds view with equal alarm the prospect of an endless life, such as they now have.

All men seem to be convinced by some cause not understood that merely to wander round the world and look at one thing after another is not the end and purpose of our being, and cannot create happiness in us. There is something in us which sounds a note of protest at the mere suggestion of such an endless form of existence. This is a vague knowledge, no doubt, but it is thoroughly decisive, and it indicates a definite purpose in life, such as exists in some mysterious way in the bosom of a little seed. Plant the seed and give it suitable nurture and protection, and a certain kind of tree will come forth. We have some dim knowledge that such is the case with us also, so that there is discontent within us whenever

this growth is obstructed, or the force within us is dissipated. How common is the feeling among old people that their lives have been scattered, that they have lacked direction, that they have failed to obtain some precious treasure which might have been gained quite easily.

As the desire to master environment drives us to study all material objects and the laws which govern them, and so develops our power of thought, and as association with others in this work quickens our power of love, so does this desire for fulfilment develop our will. All these faculties are two-sided. First, each is a form of knowledge, and secondly it is a power. With thought we know about material things. The material world is not capricious, as life appears to be. Its laws, we say, are inviolable, that is, the same cause produces always the same effect. We can study material nature, can use wood and stone, and can employ steam and electricity, because they are not of one mood and character today and another tomorrow, as living things, and especially men, are. But we must have love in addition to understand the moods of life. And to understand ourselves, our inmost purpose and our destiny, we must have will. The will is not merely a power of decision; it is the self knowing itself, and acting according to the fundamental purpose of its being.

Chapter II

TUITION AND INTUITION

Into the skies, one summer's day,
I sent a little Thought away;
Up to where, in the blue round,
The sun sat shining without sound.

Then my Thought came back to me.—
Little Thought, what did you see?
In the regions whence you come?
And when I spoke, my Thought was dumb

But she breathed of what was there,
In the pure bright upper air;
And, because my Thought so shone,
I knew she had been shone upon.

Rands

Give all to love;
Obey thy heart;
Friends, kindred, days,
Estate, good fame,
Plans, credit, and the Muse—
Nothing refuse.

'Tis a brave master;
Let it have scope:
Follow it utterly,
Hope beyond hope:

. . . . . .

But it is a god,
Knows its own path,
And the outlets of the sky.

It was never for the mean;
It requireth courage stout,
Souls above doubt,
Valor unbending:
Such 'twill reward;—
They shall return
More than they were,
And ever ascending.

Emerson

The Stream of Personal Life

It would take more skill than mine to describe a man—that is to say, what he is to himself. But I can symbolize him by a stream, sometimes pleasantly flowing, broad and placid, through smiling meadows,

sometimes narrow and deep, boiling and roaring as it rushes between steep cliffs, over a rocky bed. This is a stream, not of water, but of reproductions of facts mingled with fancies in imagination in the mind, a stream covered with bubbles representing present facts and fancies, which form and break, and form and break again. The consciousness of the man is borne along this stream, sipping as it goes the delights and sorrows of pleasure and pain. Men think they live an outward material life, but really they live in this stream.

Into this stream, as it passes along between its banks, all sorts of leaves and dust are blown, and sometimes stones hurtle into it from the cliffs; soon these things sink to the bottom or drift to the sides, but they have formed their bubbles in the stream—right facts, wrong facts, fancies—which memory forms and forgetfulness breaks again and again. Through the senses new facts thus enter the stream of life and consciousness.

These injectaments instruct the man. He is receiving tuition from the outer world through the senses. Everything means something to each man, according to what he is. This which I call a chair is a fact, but it is not a chair to a mouse; he may regard it as a shelf, and be somewhat disappointed to find no cheese upon it. What the facts are in themselves nobody can say. A man may take several meanings out of

one experience of fact—it is something for the body, another thing for the mind, and something else for the soul. The world is the scripture of God, and some of it is written large, that he who runs may read, some in smaller letters, and some in diamond type.

But in addition to these instructions from the external world of material objects, which are frequent during our waking hours, there are also subtle interventions. Flashes of sunlight enter this stream from above, illuminating its surface and sometimes its depths, and when they come the men understand his facts, or some of his facts, in a new and deeper sense. This is intuition, the work of deeper thought than that which is carried on the stream. Common thought informs a man of the meaning of things for the interests of his personality. It tells him how to know things and to plan to use them, so that his body, his emotions and his mind may be safe and comfortable. It makes him a good student to whom tuition is especially useful. But it cannot explain the meaning of things for the soul, and so remove the feeling of unrest, the craving for a purpose and a goal in life.

The Simile of the Forest

I do not wish to disparage the habit of thinking. There is little enough of it in the world. But it is well to recognize that in itself it is not a panacea for the habit of dispersion of life. Sooner or later

the truth discloses itself that if we can lose ourselves among the things of the world, as a man might wander in a great forest, we may still more easily lose ourselves among thoughts. For if there are a thousand things, there are millions of thoughts possible about those things—and who shall know which is the best thought, which is the perfect idea, unless he has tried them all? If a man, shipwrecked like Robinson Crusoe, but on a much larger uninhabited island, were to seek the best spot for his habitation, he might search round for his whole lifetime before deciding where to live. It is said that no two games of chess of more than perhaps fifteen moves a side have ever been played alike. There are only thirty-two pieces on the board, and only sixty-four squares or places on which they can stand, and each piece is considerably restricted, yet their possible combinations are beyond computation, and the greatest experts find themselves quite unable to say what is the best thing to do in a given situation when only three or four moves have been played on either side. It is not by ordinary thinking that we may find the true direction of our life. Intuition must be added to tuition.

The simile of our being lost in a great forest is Oriental. The Western mind would describe our position by saying that what is the matter with us is that we have not yet grown up to the mental,

moral and spiritual stature which awaits us—that we are still in process of evolution. Unquestionably there is truth in both these attitudes. I like the former view, because it implies that if a man can find the path he will escape from the forest in a very short time. It is true that as we search among the trees our faculties grow so that we may seek more effectively tomorrow than we can today. There is an unfoldment of power that must sooner or later enable us to see the way; but I doubt whether it can be said that day by day, along with the increase of power, we come nearer to the goal. The power is something that we use. Like electricity or steam, not something that we are, and so some day we shall have enough power to come out of the forest. It is not that we are getting nearer to the edge of it all the time. The idea that we accumulate to perfection is offensively material. I suppose that men look through the door into the promised land many times before the Intuition of the Will speaks to them with compelling voice and causes them to enter. They wander round and round the outside of the high wall which surrounds this garden, and each time as they pass the door they peep inside and think how nice it is. Some day they will enter, and then say to themselves: "Why did I not do this before? I could so easily have done it long ago."

The Intuition of Knowledge

It has been said before that mankind is constantly being taught in this world in two manners—through tuition and intuition. The statement is true in a general way, but the root of the matter is that a man really *understands* only through intuition. By tuition is meant the teaching given to us by the outside world through experience. But even then those things are not understood, no matter how much we may look at them or think about them—until there is a flash of intuition. It is common for people to think that they know what things are because they see them, but this is really not the case at all. Truly we see them, but we do not know what they are; the sight is meaningless, until something comes out from the depths of the mind and says: "Ah, I know you!" This process is so rapid with regard to familiar things that people do not notice that it takes place at all. Suppose you open a book printed in Sanskrit or Japanese. You will see there a number of forms and signs which mean nothing to you, and you may as well hold the page upside down or sideways. But once you know the script you cannot quite see it the same again. We know the script of table and chairs, of trees and mountains and all other such things from our point of view, and so have that much of their meaning.

Almost every great thinker is ready to bear testimony to the existence of the intuition of knowledge. One may imagine that Newton, for example, who discovered the principal or law of gravitation, had such an experience. He saw an apple fall to the ground. He wondered why things always fall to the ground. And then it suddenly flashed into his mind that apples do not fall to the ground, even though they seem to do so. He realized that what was happening was that matter attracts matter—so the apple and the earth ran to meet each other—though the earth, being by far the more massive, performed only a proportionately small share of the apparent movement. On that discovery a large amount of modern engineering depends. It was intuition—something from within the depths of the man—not a process of thought.

It is said that the same great philosopher possessed a cat and a kitten. He was so fond of them that he wished to give them free access to his room, so he cut two holes in his door, a big one for the cat, and a small one for the kitten! Here was an instance of action without thought but according to ideas—a phenomenon which occurs occasionally among philosophers when the mind is abstracted, and more frequently among ordinary men than they ever realize because the mind is inactive. Thinking is the use of ideas; a thought would have put the ideas of the cat and the kitten together, and to that extent would

have unified the action. Thought alone makes the universe of material action coherent.

Another celebrated account of intuition was that of Archimides, who discovered the principle of specific gravity. Like many a great man, he was playing in his bath, when suddenly he realized that a floating object displaced a volume of water exactly equal to its own weight. It is said that he jumped out of his bath and ran through the streets crying: "I have found it. I have found it." Some intuition is also needed to understand such discoveries as these. I have known students who would gaze hopelessly and blankly at their teacher while he was trying to expound this simple principle to them, until suddenly the light came.

Intuition is thus not a very rare thing. All men possess it in some degree. Quite frequently a scientist or an inventor will puzzle over a problem for a long time without success, only to find that later on, perhaps when he is not thinking about the matter, the solution suddenly flashes into his mind. His previous thinking has prepared him, just as to some extent the teaching professor prepares the minds of his pupils, but the intuition comes in a flash. Sometimes it illuminates the whole mind, like lightning on a dark night. Sometimes it comes from such a depth of our being that we regard it as phenomenal, or "psychic." Of this kind is the well-authenticated story of Pro-

fessor Agassiz, which is told by Abercrombie in his *Physiology*. To the best of my memory it is as follows: The Professor had found protruding from a stone in Le Jardin des Plantes, in Paris, a portion of a fossilized fish of a very unusual kind. It meant much to him in the classification which he was trying to do that he should discover what the remainder of this fossil was like. The authorities in charge of the garden would not give him permission to break open the stone, so he tried in every possible way to think out what its form must be. But, notwithstanding all his learning, he found the task fruitless. One night, however, he woke up from sleep with a perfectly clear picture of the entire fish in his mind's eye. With great presence of mind, before the vision could fade, he jumped out of bed, got paper and pencil, and sketched it. And afterwards he was convinced that the form which his imagination had presented to him was correct.

One of the most profound and striking of all such experiences was that which came to many soldiers during the late European war, in the form of a premonition. I have heard several officers who spent much time on the western front relate the same thing. A soldier who had perhaps been in battle many times before would suddenly realize that he was to be killed in some forthcoming movement. He would say to his comrades: "This time I shall not come back." In

all the cases of which I have heard—and they are quite numerous—the man was killed. But by far the most striking feature of these premonitions was that that, which somewhere in the depths of the man knew that he was to be killed, knew also that death did not matter; it gave the knowledge and at the same time took away the fear of death. At a certain depth in our being the purpose of life is known.

The universality of these intuitions demonstrates the existence of a universal mind. Exteriorly we contact a universal world. The senses of our bodies are limited, in their scope, certainly, but they put us in touch with an unlimited world. It may be argued that my bodily life ends only where my senses end, and therefore I am in actual association with the clouds, the sun and the stars. Let us not be deceived by the senses, and imagine that our eyes are not as good as our fingers. And even where the senses do not penetrate, they halt at points and objects which are affected and modified by others, so that our body puts us in touch with the entire material world. So do our intuitions relate us to universal consciousness. In our meditations and inspirations we often become aware that we are receiving from a consciousness whose power is vastly superior to ours. It is sometimes as though a great genius suddenly spoke to us, and in a few words cleared up long-standing obscurities of thought. Some people are so much aware of this that

they do not count their best thoughts as personal. One great poet said that he valued his poems, not because they were his own, but because they were not.

The Intuition of Love

The highest human emotion, like the real understanding, comes from within. It is a response to reality beyond the reach of the senses or of reason. It is the Intuition of Love. Emerson affirmed its existence when he wrote:

> I know not whether there be, as is alleged, in the upper regions of our atmosphere a permanent westerly current, which carries with it all atoms which rise to that height, but I see that when souls reach a certain clearness of perfection, they accept a knowledge and motive above selfishness. A breath of Will blows eternally through the universe of souls in the direction of the Right and Necessary. It is the air which all intellects inhale and exhale, and it is the wind which blows the world into order and orbit.

Sir Alfred Russel Wallace, who discovered the principle of natural selection at the same time as Darwin, announced the same fact in other terms. He said:

> The love of truth, the delight in beauty, the passion for justice, and the thrill of exultation with which we hear of any act of couragious self-sacrifice, are the workings within us of a higher nature, which has not developed by means of the struggle for material existence.

No one has yet been able to give a reason why one soul should decide to love another better than itself,

so that in the extreme case self-sacrifice becomes possible. Sometimes it is suggested that it is all an outgrowth of the motherhood instinct, which has a material foundation in that it is necessary for the preservation of the race. Nature cares more for the race than for the individual, we are told. That is very intelligent of Nature! But that instinct is only an expression of the unity of life, on account of which one acts for another, as, in the united body, eyes guide feet and feet carry eyes.

Sometimes the cynical say that much self-sacrifice is only for glory—to gratify one's self-esteem. So when men say "Give us honor or give us death," or "Give us liberty or give us death," they are somewhat in the same class with the man who entered a bank, brandished a bomb before the teller, and demanded a hundred thousand dollars, in default of which he would blow up the building, including, presumably, himself. But there are surely no such reflections in the mind of the average mother and father, let alone cases such as those of the Lord Buddha, or Wilberforce, or Grace Darling. Love is a reality of life, and needs no material reason to apologize for its existence.

Elsewhere I have told the story of a wandering Indian monk or sannyasi, whose sole object in life was to go about doing good, who came to a village where a rich and cruel old man was in power. This man had a son who was universally liked and es-

teemed, and who would in due course inherit the old man's powers and riches. The latter, though always ailing, and a torment to himself as much as to others, would nevertheless probably continue to exist for some considerable time. "So," thought the sannyasi, "would it not be a very great act of kindness and goodness to kill that old man?" It would bring happiness to many, and the only person to suffer would be myself. Yet he did not do it. His reasons for this abstention are not recorded. They cannot be recorded, for he was responding to the Intuition of Love. We do not love another because of any perfections or virtues that he may show. We may like or dislike people on such accounts, as they minister to our comfort and pleasure, or our discomfort and pain. But love is above such considerations. Those who love are those who see the life, which is never wholly obscured. A brother, for example, for whom propinquity in the first place has struck the spark of love, can do nothing to forfeit that. If he errs grievously, nevertheless we shield him. Sorrow is possible in such a case, but love cannot die for these reasons, although it may flush and fade like tints in the sky. That the Christ-spirit, as it has been called, in us, loves all, is a testimony to our inner unity. No man can be cut off from the body of humanity because of his imperfections. If any cell in this great body is diseased it must ultimately be won back to health. There is only one

way of getting rid of an enemy; you cannot entirely part from him, but must sooner or later convert him into a friend.

The Initiation of Love

Thought is by nature feminine—a handmaiden at first to personal desire and later on to love, which is spiritual desire. There is more hand than brain in its essential substance, for it does not supply the motive but provides the means. Thought deals with the relations among things, so that, given a motive, it will find out how to act. When the mind in all its power bows down before the intuition of love and says "Henceforth you are my master; I will serve you always," the man becomes an initiate of the mysteries of Christ or Krishna, or the God of Love. If there be outward ceremonies, of initiation, they are only intended to announce that this stage has been reached, that this reality has been attained by the newly-admitted member of a brotherhood of those who acknowledge one another as having achieved the same.

Through one in whom this intuition is working love pours in an unfailing stream. He cannot live for bodily enjoyment or amusement, nor for the accumulation of knowledge, but must respond to the need of the world. It therefore happens that the young initiate puts forth much energy, and sometimes the looker-on sees much of it to be wasteful and fruitless.

Later on he himself discovers the wisdom of placing his love where it can be most fruitful. It is only for a time that he loses some of his reason; later it reappears, as handmaiden to love. The proverb that foolishness is the common failing of the good applies only to the novice in goodness. Love is not to be seen; it but directs the forces which can be seen—those of the body, the emotions and the mind. And those forces are limited. It is therefore not careless and overflowing geniality and generosity which are the best expressions of love. I know a great man who loves unceasingly, from the moment of waking to that of sleeping. Many people think him cold, because he places his forces carefully. It requires very little sensitiveness to see how he gives it to one and then to another, quite deliberately, where he can see that it will produce the best effect, the ultimate greatest benefit. He is wise enough not to spread himself out too thin. But while he is directing his energy thus in definite channels he is also considering those who think themselves left out in the cold, because in his eyes those whom he specially helps are expected to become harbingers of the age of love in their turn.

Chapter III

THE INTUITION OF THE WILL

Bring me my bow of burning gold!
Bring me my arrows of desire!
Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold!
Bring me my chariot of fire!

Blake

Grow as the Flower Grows

He who learns to receive the Intuition of Understanding and the Intuition of Love and delights to follow them, lives according to Nature. It is a beautiful Nature. Earth and sunshine mingle in his life. But we must have more than that; we need earth, sunshine and power or direction. It is thus with the growing things around us—with a tree, which takes earth and sunshine and builds them into a beautiful form, but does so because of the directive power within the seed. I suspect that somewhat the same thought was in the minds of those who originated the doctrine of the Trinity, which appears in almost all religions. The earth with its fruits, and the life-giving sun, the "light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world," are forms of God, but behind these is the mysterious power which is using both for its purpose —not an inscutable purpose, but one little known, and felt rather as an inward urging than seen as an outward goal.

Our simile of a tree is incomplete. It does not go far enough. The same impulse which takes hold of matter and life and forms the tree, produces further seeds and future trees. These are not new seeds and new trees. They are a continuation of one movement, which, however, is cyclic in character, like the rolling of a wheel, in which the spokes of birth, youth, maturity, age and death, follow each other in a perpetual day and night of life.

Future trees will be better than present ones. It is said that we have no guarantee of that. People point to the flower, and ask: "How can man hope to reach great heights by any effort of his own, when even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these?" But they forget that there is a difference between the old wild orange of the Himalayan slopes and the cultivated fruit of our day, between the rose of the hedgerow and the many-petaled flower of the garden, between the wild horse and the beautiful, skilful and intelligent product of the racing stud. They forget that the furs from the fox farms, the feathers from the ostrich farms and the hides from the lizard and alligator farms are superior by far to those of the wild, and that even in the struggle of Nature—which is no doubt seriously over-painted—the smaller creature develops cunning and skill and wonderful instinct, and the beauty and joy which skill always produce, with the aid of his friend the enemy. Thomas

Seton relates how some American gray squirrels were seen to entertain themselves with birds of prey; instead of dashing for safety they would partly expose themselves and dodge round the tree trunks, teasing their enemy, and literally playing with death, with immeasurable benefit to themselves. True it is that the sun of love can call forth the quickest and the rarest blossoms, but failing that a very good makeshift will always be made even of self-interest and conflict. Man as a god to the lower creatures is not all love, but he is doing very well.

In man the divine leading is within himself. Were this not so, his lot as the crown of all beings on earth would be indeed pitiable. A roof with no affinity for the sky would always be in danger of falling in. But just as he has in his body chemical forces which enable him to walk upstairs against gravitation, so in the soul there is a seed of that divine principle which supplements the earth and the sun. It is because of this, that future men will be better men. Man, like the flowers, is lifted from above.

Therefore it is said: "Grow as the flower grows, opening your heart to the sun." The flower does not work, nor does it take account of death. It is a true instinct which causes men to prefer play to work. Work is always degrading, and play uplifting. But of course we must be careful of our words. Work is

that which is done against our will; work which we enjoy is play. I would not call it work if an artist tried twenty times over to produce some effect upon his canvas. But if the artist is impatient, is thinking of ulterior ends, of how soon the picture will be finished, or how soon he will be able to handle the cash, then of course those twenty efforts will be dreadful toil and drudgery—indeed, a hundred efforts instead of twenty will be necessary, and perhaps even these will not avail. In that case his play has become work. When the animals work, they are only playing in earnest. Careful observers of ants have seen them playing about their holes—throwing grains of sand about as if they were balls. And the little squirrel in its play not only develops its physical skill, but also learns the "roads" of the trees, and comes to know where the leaps are necessary and how long they are.

When we have a race of better men, they will not count their wages; they will do what we call work for the delight of creation, as part of that divine activity which in the Hindu scriptures at least is spoken of as play. Those people would not regard it as respectful to God to say that He works. Our god-man will thus take no account of necessity or of death. Like the flower he will live for the day. But of this we may be sure, that he will live for a longer day than men do now, that the earth under his fingers will

blossom and fructify in a million ways unknown to man of our primitive times. His art will not be artificial, but will concern everything.

He who would receive the divine leading, the Intuition of the Will, must first acknowledge his own immortality to himself, must be prepared to be "strong as one who doth for evermore endure." He must acknowledge no necessity and take no account whatsoever of death. Men say, "I will complete this work today." "I shall be able to do such and such a thing before I die." And sometimes, "I fear it is no use my taking this matter up; I am already seventy or ninety (or perhaps only thirty) years old, and I cannot possibly attain success before I die." But this is not the way of the will; it is rather the acknowledgment of necessity, a bowing to events. The man of will is superior to time. He turns his attention to his purpose, and keeps it there until it is fulfilled.

Later than and additional to the love which considers others and their pleasures and pains is the will which knows the purpose of our being, which has predestined a triumphant goal as the end of human life. One may be as full of love as of thought; the Intuition of Love may convert our tractless and dangerous forest of thought into a land of beautiful meadows and gardens. It is not enough. We may wander for ages in those pleasant parks, but the Voice of the Silence, the Intuition of the Will, will ulti-

mately sow these lands with discontent, for we must become lords of lightning, masters of the world, homeless, triumphant. The Intuition of the Will polarizes every particle of our lives like a great magnet, and put an end to purposeless wandering — bodily, emotional or mental.

The Importance of Obedience

To receive the Intuition of the Will the most complete and delighted obedience is necessary. It must be a glad welcome at the gate, an eagerness to catch the slightest flutter of the divine command, an entire disregard of what disturbance it may cause in the personal life of the body, what havoc it may make with our accepted and comfortable routine. The will is the faculty with which we change ourselves, so we must expect upheavals in the bodily life, and even in the emotional and mental life, when its voice is heard.

It is not in any big things that difficulty is likely to arise. It is easy to decide to go to Canada or South Africa, and to start an entirely new life. The difficulty is to get up five minutes earlier in the morning, or to stop the habit of lying in bed "thinking" before going to sleep. The mere idea that the will is going to create dramatic changes, or the desire that it should do so, is sufficient to keep it from manifesting itself. To call upon the will with the slightest desire as to what its

commands should be is to close the avenues to this intuition. To feel after a command has come that you wish it were just a little different is to destroy the channel of future communications.

All such wishes imply that one is taking in preference the dictates of the body, including the personal emotions and thoughts especially attached to the body, and is very well satisfied to live among them. In such case there is no real will, there is only a desire to keep what is pleasant and to get rid of the things which are disagreeable.

It is not by discontent and disgust with the conditions of life as it is that a man will reach the higher state; it is by nourishing the slightest germ of a vision that he may have had of something better; it is by taking hold of his best moments, not allowing them to fade, but keeping them in mind and gradually spreading them over the whole of his life. It is by accepting as best whatever is, and then making of it a better best.

To take an instance of this — a man loves his friends, and wishes them well, and he knows that it has been said that he should love his enemies also, and that the advice is good. "But," he expostulates, "it is not natural! Whenever I see my enemy I become agitated and angry. How can I feel affectionate and wish him well?" It is simple enough. You have only to recollect the feeling which arises spontaneously in

your better moments when you are thinking of a friend, and then deliberately to extend this emotion to your enemy. If you say that is hard, I reply that you are loving only yourself, and you think you are loving others when in fact you are merely liking those who please you.

The Peace of the Will

When the will is in charge we have reached a place of peace. We are not our emotions. They are only forces playing about in our personality. We can choose exactly what they shall be. Then our own position is one of perfectly calm strength. It is the difference in inward sensation between the old mariner, who was at the mercy of the winds, and the master of a modern steamship. I read the other day of a four days' test in the maiden voyage of a large motor ship. On dead reckoning, in stormy weather, it was carried only six miles out of its course. I have no doubt the feeling of the master on the bridge contained far more satisfaction and happiness than those of the old time sailor.

So ignorant is the world of this topic that it does not know the meaning of peace. It can only think negatively on the subject, and try to picture the absence of war and strife. This is so not only in our political situations, but also in the life of each man. He thinks that a state of peace is passive, negative, without

motive because without danger. He is of those who have no real inner motive, but must be enticed into activity like the famous coster's donkey following the bundle of carrots dangling in front of him from the end of a stick held by his driver seated in the cart. Or else he is driven by fear of the consequences of inaction. His idea is that one thing is chasing another, head to tail, all round the world, and he himself is one in this series. And so he thinks peace would be passivity or negativity. On the contrary, it is excitement that is negativity, that marks dependence upon something outside. Peace is the emotion of strength, the inward sensation that no effort need be put forth. Effort is unnecessary, because our power is irresistible. Therefore it is not will to exert force, to push and scramble, to show authority, even to command oneself like a sergeant-major. When machinery is perfected, it also will be quiet. The flow of electricity, the expansion of steam — these are quiet, but they are the power. The imperfect machinery through which they work, which can scarcely bear their power, makes the noise. He who in his own life, hearing the racket of machinery in motion, thinks that to be the will, has not yet found the will, for the will is the quietest thing in the world.

Sometimes the Intuitions of the Will come down into the life without being seen or known. There will then be direction from within. You will act according to

knowledge better than you know. A man takes a walk; he decides quite casually to go down a certain street, to walk on one side of it; he meets an old friend who says something to him which suggests a new line of business or a new outlook, and changes the whole of his life. Is it accident? Possibly not. The whole matter may have been deliberately engineered by the inner man. He who is willing to obey will receive much guidance; but he must remember that the higher self wants only spiritual things, and is indifferent to pleasure and pain. He may run you into an accident or terminate your life as readily as confer upon you a legacy of a million pounds.

No one who wants to use the Intuition of the Will must ask it to solve particular personal problems. The will is not intended to help the personal man to find out how to do what *he* wants to do. It is concerned with graver matters, but as it comes more and more into the life, it will in its own quiet way clean and comb away the tangle of common desires. It is like those fairies which were fabled to come in the night and do the housework for the German peasant woman. It would be unspeakable sacrilege to ask the Intuition of the Will to solve any personal problems. You must do your best without its aid. But it will solve them all the same, in its own good time, and generally when you are not looking.

The Walking Trance

When a thinker receives an intuition of knowledge it is because for a moment, intentionally or otherwise, he has fallen into a trance. For a fraction of a second his senses have ceased to register what is passing before the eyes or sounding in the ears. On the sliding scale of his personal existence his consciousness has for the moment ascended to a great height, and it has returned with intuitive knowledge. This is a process which can be practiced, increased, perfected; and it applies to the Intuition of the Will as well as to that of knowledge.

For this I may take the simile of a well, dug in a large field or garden. People think of a well usually as a hole in the ground, at the bottom of which there is a layer of sweet water. But really it is the well-system that is the entire object. All over the field water falls occasionally. It sinks through the ground, and when it has reached a certain depth, according to the nature of the soil, it has become pure, and some of this finds its way into the hole, and it may be is there joined also by some waters from a distance. Each man is such a well-system. All over the surface of the field of his personal existence experiences fall upon him, and make their impression. They sink in a little and affect his emotions; a little deeper, and they stir his thoughts; then they sink deeper still into the

regions of intuitive knowledge, love and will, and there they are purified, so that their true meaning for life is seen. If a man, therefore, learns to go down that well into the depths and bring up this pure water of his life, he will have Intuitions. He will begin to know the significance of every event for the divine purposes of the soul. He will have solved the perpetual riddle of the sphinx, which stands questioning him through every experience in life.

The Necessity for Self-Training

The man of will takes his destiny into his own hands. He realizes that he must cultivate himself, or remain uncultivated. The Intuition of the Will alone can give true leading at each fork in the road of life; it alone can set up the ultimate ideal, though it may temporarily direct us to follow some example that is seen. It is not inimical to obedience and pupilage, but it distinctly makes the pupil the chooser of his own teacher. He does not follow one who is said to be great, through fear of missing something should he not do so. He does not take medicines of uncertain value, in the spirit of hope. He is too busy making use of that which he knows to be good to waste time with anything that is doubtful to him.

If he seeks a teacher or a master in any of the arts of life, or even in occultism, it is he who makes the selection. Undoubtedly there are teachers in the

world. There are gurus, arhats, adepts. They are busy people, and cannot do everything in the material world. It is possible that one may be thrown into intimate relations with some one more advanced or expert, such as that, in such a way as to produce a favorable relationship. Then the great man will be great to you and will help you to cultivate yourself. But to sink back because this has not happened, to hope and to wait or to try to attract attention, is surely not the way of the man of will. We may express this sentiment almost in the words of an old English poem: "If he be not great to me, what care I how great he be!"

Something which must be called meditation is therefore prescribed. As its consequence there will be occult polarization of the life; direction will appear, then power over yourself. It is impossible to say in any case what will be the direction and polarization. You may find yourself becoming an aritst, a philanthropist, a scientist, a philosopher, a dramatist—of one type, because one man cannot do everything. But as an acorn will grow into an oak and nothing else, so will your destiny be the fulfillment of a type.

Chapter IV

THE TRAINING FOR INTUITION

A clean life, an open mind, a pure heart, an eager intellect, an unveiled spiritual perception, a brotherliness for all, a readiness to give and receive advice and instruction, a courageous endurance of personal injustice, a brave declaration of principles, a valiant defence of those who are unjustly attacked, a constant eye to the ideal of human progression and perfection which the sacred science depicts—these are the golden stairs up the steps of which the leaner must climb to the Temple of Divine Wisdom.

Blavatsky

Voluntary Reflection

The first step in deliberate self-training is the practice of voluntary reflection. People usually do not reflect much upon what they have seen and heard, however much they may have been excited and interested by it at the time of the experience. Even when they do reflect it is scarcely voluntary, but is due to pressure upon the personality from without or to physiological excitement set up within the body.

The habit of voluntary reflection is distinguished from involuntary reflection by the fact that it is deliberate. You lean back, as it were, in your chair, and look over the matter of the book that you have read, the play that you have seen, the incident that you have experienced, not with a deliberate intention to study it, but just to look it over several times. For

want of this habit the rich variety of our modern life leaves little or no knowledge behind it in the mind, and fails to awaken thought. Very often when subjects such as chemistry, history and economics are being studied, or when languages are being learnt, the student makes very little progress. An hour's work makes little impression upon the mind if twenty-four hours are allowed to elapse before the subject is revised. But in a school or college, where the jargon of the students contains frequent references to the salient points of their studies a kind of familiarity results which gives the subject a footing in the mind. The same principle applies in the case of young people who decide to model themselves upon someone whom they admire. Girls attend the moving pictures and sometimes fix upon one of the Stars as their ideal. They are full of enthusiasm while the picture lasts and for an hour or two afterwards, but they lose the point and fail to stamp it on their lives for want of reflection.

Voluntary reflection not only impresses the mind in this way. It starts the process of thought. The collection and review of ideas or mental pictures is one thing. Thinking is another. But after a little time thoughts will begin to come. Then the beginner may do well to cherish them and note them down for future reflection, since they easily evade the memory.

Further, this meditation or voluntary reflection will

prepare the way for intuition. It need not be frequent and should not be strenuous. When others snatch up a novel or a newspaper or seek a conversation with some one else to fill an odd quarter of an hour, you will quietly reflect upon your doings and feelings and thinkings. And you must look at these things as if they were happening to someone else. You will review these events in an impersonal way, as if you were an intelligent tourist inspecting the home or village life of some picturesque savage.

Voluntary Decision

As the practice of thinking facilitates the Intuition of Knowledge, and of loving, that of Love, so the habit of definite—though not necessarily rapid—decision favors the Intuition of the Will. There are few things more fatiguing than the habit of indecision in small matters. Sometimes people wear themselves out in trying to decide how they shall enjoy themselves, where they shall go for a holiday, whether to the seaside or the country. I knew a lady who used frequently to tire herself by trying to decide what dress she would wear, and sometimes it is said she would array herself for going out, and then suddenly at the very last moment rush and change her stockings or even her entire dress. Once, when she was going on a voyage of several weeks a friend adviced her to make a time-table of dresses, and they sat together

and made an engagement book of her wearing apparel; the dates were written down, with morning, afternoon and evening in the horizontal columns, and in the vertical columns, dress, shoes, stockings, and even underclothing, were set forth. The lady kept to her program, and afterwards declared that she had never before felt so free and happy; she seemed to have four times the nervous energy which had been hers before. If you cannot decide small matters in any other way, and the time for their decision is ripe, do it by the tossing of a coin. This, however, should never tempt one into a lazy method of decision; it is permissible only when one has fully considered the pros and cons, and cannot decide because they are evenly balanced, or because they do not present sufficient data on which to base a definite judgment. The idea is not, of course, that the coin will tell us what is best (as if it were a mode of sortilege) but that we shall cease to worry.

The lady's method of making a list was not original, of course. I remember an account, written by some distinguished man, of the causes to which he attributed his phenomenal success in life. Among these was one which he seemed to prize above all the rest—the habit of making a list early each morning of the things which he had to do during the day. He said that with the aid of this practice he was able to do ten times

as much as he could before he adopted it; not because he really worked very much harder, but because he had ceased to waste time in idle and irritating speculations as to what he should do next, and whether he should do it now or leave it until after lunch or until tomorrow. He discovered that these troublesome questions, utterly unimportant as they were, had the power to sap his strength and resolution, so as to leave him unfit to enjoy his work. Their effect was such that he found himself constantly turning aside to some trifling dissipation that would for the moment divert his mind, such as that of picking up a casual magazine to fill an "odd half hour."

This suggests an extension of our voluntary rule and a question each morning: "What shall I think about today?" A list may be made and when moments of inactivity come, you will take out your paper, select an item, and cross it off afterwards if you feel that you have done with that point.

Physical Rules

Just as in meditation it is a common error to desire some sensation in the body, such as a feeling between the eyebrows, so in his outer life our candidate would sometimes like to see or feel something unusual, so as to be sure that he is progressing. But that is undesirable. The physical rules which are prescribed to

assist the downflow of intuition are not in the nature of stunts or circus performances, but are the familiar rules of wise living which all men know.

It would be possible to take lists of these virtues from many sources. I will, however, give only two suggestions, first the ten commandments from Patanjali's ancient book *The Yoga Sutras,* and secondly a set of rules as actually given to pupils in an eastern school. The ten commandments are: "Thou shalt not injure others, lie, steal, be incontinent, be greedy. Thou shalt be clean, content, energetic, studious and reverent." All these are to be understood in a large and generous way; reverence is due to all living beings, for example, as though a part of God were there, so that they must be treated with consideration, courtesy and respect, and therefore with perfect tolerance in which there is no flicker of the supercilious. No one can rightly take up a superior position and say to others: "Some day you will stand where I stand now." That they will never do; when any other man has reached the place where we stand in the qualities which we value, he will have left us far behind in some other quality which is specially his own. For every man is unique; each fits into the scheme of things like the pieces in a child's puzzle-picture—all the pieces are necessary, however blank one may appear to be when it is seen alone.

The head of a large school in the north of India, who once proposed to give me some training for the development of psychic powers, said: "But I shall have to ask you to get rid of your pride and your excessive asceticism." That prepared me for the rules which are given in such schools. In one of them the physical rules have been recorded in English as:

1. Pure air, water and food.
2. Gentle exercise.
3. Regular hours.
4. Pleasant occupation.
5. Pleasant surroundings.

It is recorded that while the Buddha was preaching his doctrine for the conversion of the world in the neighborhood of Shravasti, a man of great wealth who suffered from many ailments came to him with clasped hands and said: "World-honored Buddha, pardon me for my want of respect in not saluting you as I ought to, but I suffer greatly from obesity, excessive drowsiness and other complaints, so that I cannot move without pain." The Tathagata, seeing the luxuries with which the man was surrounded, asked him: "Have you a desire to know the cause of your ailments?" And when the wealthy one expressed his willingness to learn, the Blessed One said: "There are five things which produce the condition of which you complain: opulent dinners; love of sleep; hankering after pleasure; thoughtlessness and lack of occupation.

Exercise self-control at your meals, and take upon yourself some duties that will exercise your abilities and make you useful to your fellow-men. In following this advice you will prolong your life."

Emotional Rules

The emotional rules given by the same authority are not so easy for some people to follow, but they are not difficult for the man or woman who will use the will. You must not be content with yourself as you are. You must determine to change yourself; then all becomes easy. It is simple enough to change the position of your arms and legs; it is just as easy, if you will believe it, to alter your emotions towards any thing or person.

The rules are: There must be

no avarice,
no fear,
no envy,
no worldly pride,
no uncharitableness,
no hatred,
no ambition, and
no curiosity.

These physical and emotional rules are given by a student in an article called "The Elixir of Life," which appears in the book *Five Years of Theosophy*. They

are well supported by the story of a Chinese sage to whom came a young man anxious to have long life. "What shall I do?" questioned the youth. "It is a great secret," replied the old man, "but go and live a pure life for a year and then come back to me." The young man did as directed, and returned to the sage. He said, "The secret cannot yet be told; go and live a still purer life for a month, and then return." Again the young man came and was sent back for a week, and again for a day, with the same instruction. And at last the wise man said: "I will now tell you the secret of long life." And he whispered very quietly into the young man's ear: "Do not be passionate; that is all."

Rules and Principles

These rules must spring from within the candidate's own heart. He must be able to say to himself when he sees them: "That is what I really want. These are *my* principles." He must not be like the schoolboy who learns his lessons because he is afraid of the teacher, or because he wants to make a success of his material life, when he is not really interested in them. If you then make a rule, it is a law of the living self; it leaves you flexible and adaptable. It is only an expression of the fact that your will is turned in a definite direction, and a recognition by the mind of the fact that it can best be served by living in a

certain way. It is true that in the beginning there must be sufficient rigidity for you to make yourself do these things, because the inertia of old habits has to be overcome.

I suppose the greatest difficulty, however, will usually be felt on account of the intolerance of others. When you do something unusual, others will laugh at you, or if they are near relations, they may try to interfere with your plans. If you wish to meditate in a train-car, for example, perhaps you cannot quite keep a seraphic expression off your face, and your neighbors will cast furtive glances at one another and smile. Be it so! You also will smile, to yourself. I recollect, as a small boy in England, the time when all city men wore tall silk hats or stiff "bowlers," and when one or two began to use what were then called, I think, Alpine hats—soft hats with a dint in the middle—others used to laugh and poke fun at them. For some inscrutable reason these pioneers of comfort and comparative elegance were regarded as somewhat effeminate. I admired their courage—they followed intelligent principles, where others were subservient to the rules of custom. In *The Bhagavad-Gita* the god within (for whom Shri Krishna spoke) says to the man: "Whatever you do—whether in working, or eating, or sacrificing, or giving or striving—do it as an offering to me."

There is one law of the higher self in this matter which must never be forgotten—respect yourself and others. If you respect yourself and not others you will of course be a nuisance, and you will degrade society, for what good things you do will be considered detestable on account of their association with your unlikable personality, which all desire to avoid and to forget as soon and as thoroughly as possible. If you respect others and not yourself you will become nothing but a secret object of amusement, and what you do will suffer because it will look silly with your silliness. If you do what you yourself have decided, and it is sensible (as we may assume) and good, and you do not waver, and compromise, and consult mere appearances, you will be secretly admired and envied. But if you criticize others by your standards, and try to apply your truth to them—if you do not respect others as well as and as much as yourself — it will be evident in your manner, and your own mind will not be single.

The Rule of Action

I must add one thing more to this advice about rules: See that you do something well, for this brings out the will. It may take you ten years or twenty years to achieve this—but for heaven's sake do it. Learn to do something as well as it can be done, leaving out of account freakish genius, such as that

of the calculating boy, or Paul Morphy, or Napoleon. Learn to dress well, speak well, walk well, ride or drive well, dance well. If you must swear, swear well; make an art of it, and it will become admirable and beautiful. By "well" I do not mean in great quantity — I do not mean wear a lot of clothes, like the native women of Bolivia, who seem to measure their social status by the number of skirt worn at once, or like a certain Queen, in whose wardrobe it is said were found some thirty thousand dresses. I do not mean talk incessantly, or carry a thousand bricks on your shoulder where other men carry only five hundred, or become the hero of a sausage-eating contest. But see that you do something better than you have been doing it; and next week or next year do it better still, if it is only putting your foot to the ground.

If you are at all inclined to be studious, read well. Make yourself master of a subject. Always have a good book on that subject on hand, so that you may read it several times a week. Do not go at it feverishly, and do not read with the thought in your mind that you are simply trying to be master of the subject. Do not think of the results, of the end of the matter, or the end of your book; but go on, and ten years later you will suddenly find that you know as much about that subject as anyone but the few greatest experts. You now stand well, on at least a small piece of ground. The inner god has a fulcrum for his lever.

The sense of will and self-respect that you now feel gives new tone to every part of your life. Remember, ten years is nothing, you will soon find that it has gone. Do not think about results, about time, but go on in the glory of the moment, enjoy the use of your will, a pioneer, an adventurer, an explorer, a discoverer, and soon you will wake to find that the whole world has become new. There is plenty of exploring and pioneer work to be done, even within the territory of your own immediate character and life.

One other suggestion I must still make. Seek ability rather than opportunities. Opportunities will come soon enough to the man of genuine ability; the inner voice will tell him when he must step forward and offer his services, and when the time is ripe he will be able to do it with no uncertain voice. I recollect the case of a young man whom I knew who joined a certain branch of the Theosophical Society at which it was the custom for visiting speakers to give occasional propaganda lectures. This young man got the idea that he could speak, if he were given a chance; but the staid old members were practically unapproachable on the subject. The young man went to every lecture given by the visitors, prepared to take their places if they became ill or should be detained. He had himself prepared a lecture in each case on somewhat similar lines, and in some cases had several times given it to an imaginary audience in the privacy of

his own room. After this had gone on for about two years, the opportunity came—he pushed himself forward, insisted on speaking, and did it well, so that henceforward there was a demand for his services. But I am not sure that if he had sought opportunity first, or had had the opportunity thrust upon him two years before, he would have done quite so well—ever.

The Results

I have said that one must not look for results, but not that they would not come. They will arrive when one is not looking, and will afterwards be found well established. It is dangerous for me to mention them here, and yet it must be done in the exposition of this matter in print. If I were teaching private pupils I should say no word of these delightful things, for I know they are as shy as the creatures of the wild, and will avoid him who seeks them with too much eagerness. The student must be as if he did not know that they were there; his heart and mind must be calm; and he must scarcely look their way.

The ambition and confidence of a child become his once more. Can you remember how the heart of a child lights up with a vision of glory when the parent or teacher speaks of great persons and great deeds, when a story is told of wonderful achievements and occurrences, of Alladin's lamp, of Prospero's cave? Or the secret ambitions of youth, unspoken because

the adverse criticism of elders is already beginning to be felt? And the disappointment of advancing years, when the struggle for bread and the fear of the morrow have spread their heavy clouds around the soul, till ambition lies bound and gagged, apparently dead? Ambition will rise again; the youth of the heart will be renewed. Have we said that there must be no ambition? That is the ambition of personal emotion. There must be no desire to shine, to occupy a position above or beyond or even beside others—such ambitions involve comparisons, and comparisons soon breed the spirit of competition. But the ambition of which we now speak is the pure and innocent ambition of childhood, to feel life to the full, to glory in it, to wear seven-league boots and to rescue princesses. There is a certain excessive altruism sometimes preached, intended to counteract a corresponding defect of selfishness; but we must not miss the truth that we are one, that what you gain honestly and unselfishly for yourself soon becomes the property of the world, like Cæsar's hand and Newton's brain and the heart of Christ.

The senses and imagination of men have been rendered dull by too much use, and painful habits of thought. It is as though a steam roller had gone over the world and flattened everything out. But presently when the mind recovers its poise, and its natural habit, things will come alive again, and every-

thing will become significant; these symbols will declare their secrets, and gods will walk the earth once more.

It has been said that among the results of this training there will be not only this prosperity, but also power. And that is true. Our treasure will overflow to others, without intention, without the intervention of a word. You will become a healing influence (especially if people do not expect it). When Jesus healed the sick he charged those who were present to let no man know, lest some should come to him merely for that sake, when the lesson of their suffering had not yet been learnt. Having been near you, those who were sick will gain new strength, will recover rapidly, sometimes at once, and those who are suffering in mind will see new light. And sometimes you will feel rushing through you forces from the inner worlds, setting every nerve a-quiver, stirring every hair, going out to this person or to that, designed for this person or for that, and you know that just as in your intuition you were in communication with consciousness greater than that which you had thought to be your own, now you are part of a will that is power, but knows exactly how and where and when that power is to be spent.

Long life is another result of this devotion to intuition. It must be so when the world holds such interest, when the heart enjoys life. Lord Bacon said

that "Heroic desires" would lengthen life. Dr. George M. Beard, an American physician, wrote:

> The force of will is a potent element in determining longevity. This single point must be granted without argument, that of two men in every way alike and similarly circumstanced, the one who has the greater courage and grit will be longer lived. One does not need to practice medicine long to learn that many might just as well live if they resolved to live, and that myriads who are invalids could become strong if they had the native or acquired will to vow they would do so. Those who have no other quality favorable to life, whose bodily organs are nearly all diseased, to whom each day is a day of pain, who are beset with life-shortening influences, yet *do* live by will alone.

Chapter V

THE THREE HALLS

Three Halls, O weary pilgrim,
Lead to the end of toils.

The Voice of the Silence

Give thy dog the merest mouthful, and he crouches at thy feet,
Wags his tail, and fawns, and grovels, in his eagerness to eat;
Bid the elephant be feeding, and the best of fodder bring;
Gravely—after much entreaty—condescends that mighty king.

Book of Good Counsels

The Hall of Ignorance

A human being, in traveling from the primitive to the perfect state of man, passes through three stages or conditions, clearly demarcated, which have been symbolized as Halls, named Ignorance, Learning and Wisdom.

The Hall of Ignorance is the condition of the man who lives not according to reason, but in response to pleasure and pain. His life is engaged in seeking what he thinks will give him pleasure, and in avoiding what he finds or considers to be painful.

Generally, in his ignorance, he attaches conceptions of pleasure and pain to the objects around him, and says that such and such a thing is pleasurable or

painful, and seldom stops to think that the pleasure or pain, except in extreme cases, depends very largely upon himself, on the way in which he regards the fact or responds to the experience. He seems to know nothing of the simple truth that we hurt or please ourselves principally by our opinions concerning the things. Also he has not sufficiently observed the truth of the old proverb that things which are pleasant in the beginning may be painful in the end, and things which are painful in the beginning may be pleasant in the end. Therefore he does not set himself any but the most trifling tasks. Even a great pleasure in prospect cannot usually attract him sufficiently to accept any large measure of present inconvenience or discomfort in its pursuit.

There is no blame to people in this stage. It is the primitive condition, the childhood of human growth. These people are to be found even in our civilized races, distributed among the well-to-do as well as the poor. Certain investigations made during the war indicate that the psychology of some thirty per cent of our population is only up to the standard of an ordinary intelligent child of twelve years old.

This class, however, contains more than these. It includes great numbers of somewhat intelligent people who use their imagination quite extensively, but almost solely in obedience to the impulses of pleasure and pain. At this stage, however, they are preparing

to move into the next Hall. They are finding that the pursuit of pleasure does not in fact result in pleasure. They are learning the truth of the old saying: "A man, musing on the objects of sense, conceives an attachment thereto. From attachment proceeds desire; from obstructed desire, anger; from anger, confusion of mind; from confusion, loss of memory; from loss of memory, inability to reason; and from inability to reason the man perishes." He may indeed perish physically, if he has become sufficiently ardent or excited, but in every case he perishes for the time being as a man. As the *Nitishataka* puts it: "The man who has no sense of literature and music is like an animal; though he has not horns and a tail, and does not eat grass, he lives a life exactly like that of cattle." Whether of the lethargic or of the aggressive type, the man in the Hall of Ignorance is not guided by reason.

The Idol Worshipers

Self-deception is universal, and it is almost deliberate. Every man wants to be God. He cannot be happy till he achieves that state, so, frequently, in his eagerness and impatience, he tries to console himself with the supposition that he is even now in some respect a little god. He dethrones the Lord and sets up a golden calf; but the Lord is a jealous god, and

will not allow him to rest permanently in the enjoyment of this pretense.

I have noticed how comfortable and happy a man becomes in a mixed assembly, where various discussion is going on, if the conversation turns upon a subject familiar to him; at once he feels more alive and becomes more at ease than he was before. The little tin god is proving himself a miracle worker, is saying or doing something which the rest of the assembly cannot; what does he care whether they admire or envy? Is this the enjoyment of faculty, like the song of a bird? Not at all. It is self-gratulation. The man thinks: "I am something; I am somebody," and feels very comfortable about it. So does the youth in school, who is given to sports but dull in the classroom, console himself with the thought that physical health and strength are more important than mere knowledge, while the short-sighted, narrow-chested scholar despises the devotee of the "mudded oaf," and drugs his mind with the idea that knowledge is everything, and the physical body does not matter, if only it can be kept well enough to retain and use its eyes.

While a man serves this absurd idol he is held in bondage. When people think they are clever or great, they cannot learn, because they do not care to hear what others have to say, or if they listen with the ears, they fail to do so with the mind.

All this is part of the fall of man. The animals have not sufficient mind and imagination to make this error; they live and die without illusion; they do not imagine themselves to be other than a part of the world, a constituent of Nature, and they anticipate no genuflection or tribute. But, as a thinker once remarked, mankind is like a drunken fool on horseback; when you prop him up on one side he falls over on the other. I remember the remark of a gentleman who was happy in a quiet way. When things went wrong and someone expressed sympathy concerning his hardships he replied: "Do not trouble yourself; everything is all right; I long ago realized that the world was not made for me." The world is imperfect, why not I also? And if so, what becomes of my demand for satisfaction? Why should the world be good, or be just, to me? These questions sum up the philosophy of those who allay their discontent in this manner. But all these are opiates for the soul.

There is nothing on earth more dangerous than consolation philosophy, whether it is the preaching of a religion which advises: "Keep your eye on heaven; think of the millions of years of happiness before you, and let that help you to forget your present pains and troubles," or the philosophy which says: "Put your trust in Nature, which has brought you to the present point and can carry you further." These omit to say that whatever a man has of good

is the accumulated result of wise efforts made by the soul, facing its problems, as a man playing chess considers: "What shall I do in this difficulty?" So both sides are wrong: those who demand, because they demand for the idol, and those who disclaim, because they ignore the god within.

The Vicarious Idol

Writers on the endocrine glands have lately described two classes of men who are evidently still in the Hall of Ignorance—the slave and the careerist. The former is by nature a coward. Even his apparently heroic acts are only expressions of cowardice; they are desperate remedies, not intelligent and loving actions. This slave has not the gumption to make an idol of himself, but he sets up another, not in genuine admiration of greatness, but in weakness, to have something upon which to lean.

Thus the young man "in love with love," anxious to enjoy his own feeling, and needing some one upon whom to base it, will fall in love with any pretty lady who comes along, and one after another—but he is really in love with his own feelings. And the foolish devotee, secretly knowing that he has made his idol, will screen it from the severe light of day, and resent any examination of it by common reason. His loyalty savors of self-aggrandizement; "You must bow before my god" sounds in my ears very much like, "You

must bow before me." The devotee who talks to us in such a manner as to assume that his object of devotion is superior to the person whom he is addressing, is very irritating. He cannot see that in such an assertive attitude he is imposing himself upon others, that he is declaring himself to be the best judge of greatness and the patron of the great. If all this folly is the effect of glands—then the wise man rules his glands, the fool obeys them.

Notwithstanding all its spirituality, admiration contains a dangerous subconscious self-induction, which sets up a contrary current, unseen but powerfully insidious, and to be guarded against. When it is not composed chiefly of the unmanly hopes of the slave mentality to obtain something for nothing from the object of devotion, but rises to the height of true admiration, it often causes its possessor to feel that he would be guilty of blasphemy, should he declare to himself that he will presently be as good as that object; so a powerful retarding complex is produced. This is not taking into account the fact that such persons are often raised into a cult, and used to bludgeon large numbers of people into hypocrisy or into the ranks of the slaves. Men are taught not to think, but to follow, though history plainly shows that an ounce of inquiry is worth a ton of acquiescence. So men, instead of using the lever, worship the ful-

crum. And he who accepts the admiration suffers in turn; people cannot talk freely before him, and so he ceases to learn, and then if he has power, he administers it without knowledge of who is who and what is what.

In the early days of the mind's activities it is but a slave to these delusions; it works to sustain them, not regarding the truth, but the pleasure. Here we have a clue to the real fall of man. How comes it that he is so idiotic, such a fool that the laughing jackass sometimes appears by comparison a dignified gentleman, so cruel that the tiger can give him lessons in gentleness? It is through his power of thought that he falls; the worst is the corruption of the best. His mind, which was born of heaven, has become servant of the desires of a ridiculous idol. A Tamil proverb says that no man should consent to serve an unworthy and ungrateful master — but we all do it. The mind dwells on illusory pleasures and pains, and contrives a thousand means to obtain or avoid them. Later it will be engaged in pursuing the good, the beautiful and the true. Then folly and cruelty will fall away, the idol will crumble into dust, and the sun of happiness will shine.

This is not a resurrection which may be expected to come of itself. Each man must make it happen by becoming master of his own mind. The mind is but

an instrument, a tool; grasp and use it with your divine hand; use your will in deciding what shall occupy your thoughts.

Life and Death

Some old settlers used to say that the only good 'possum is a dead 'possum; I am inclined to parody this and observe that the only wise man is a dead man. I am confident that most men do not really live until they die. They have so separated the subjective life of thought from the objective life of action down here that they must complete the circle and give themselves to the subjective before they can pass further on or take up a new lesson. They have read a page in the book of life, and they must afterwards turn the matter over in their minds and consider what it means. During objective life they have been collecting materials for this life of thought, which may be so vivid a function that it recalls our wooden realities into being, and manipulates them till they become supple and living, till stones and bricks laugh and sing, and the hideous day becomes a fairy pantomime. Men have called that state, in its first phase, in which they must give up their illusions, hell, and in its second phase, when they are learning to see the truth and the life, heaven.

But there is no real need for this division. It is part of the madness that men have become all eyes

and no brain. Our hero sees a million things and reads a thousand books, and all this is stacked away in the unused chambers of the mind. There is a story of a man who wanted a house and went with the agent to look over one. "I like this house very much indeed," he declared, "but I am sorry I cannot take it." "Oh," said the agent, "What is the defect? Perhaps we can remedy that." "No," said the prospective client, "I am afraid not. You see there is no room in which to put the things I don't want!" But every man's mind is well provided in this respect. Sooner or later he must open up that chamber, go through all the shelves and drawers and boxes and learn why this and why that.

It is not easy for the light of the soul to play upon these treasures while the mind is in bondage, yet there are occasions of stress in which it may break in and give the man a divine lesson. The life of Cardinal Wolsey offers us an illustration of this. With what energy and greatness that man bent all the resources of his powerful nature to the pursuit of ambition, ruthless in his aims, until a halt was called to his reckless career, and for a moment the mind stood still, and the man saw. And then he said that if he had only served his God with half the zeal he served his king, He would not in his age have left him naked to his enemies. Sometimes people say that these were poor tears, but I believe he saw God or the good for

the time. Doubtless had fortune reversed itself once more the vision had faded, but it could not have done so utterly. For another the lesson might work in a contrary manner; crushed with difficulties a man sometimes becomes bitter and hard or betakes himself to consolation philosophy, but when fortune suddenly smiles upon him he sees that he was wrong, and that there is divine delight and meaning in the right enjoyment of luxury and power.

The Hall of Learning

To be guided by reason is to obey the laws of Nature. The man who has reached the stage at which he realizes that the greatest pleasure comes not from seeking pleasure but from seeking to live in harmony with Nature is in the Hall of Learning. This does not mean a life according to Nature, or going back to Nature as it is commonly expressed. All the great triumphs of modern invention are but examples of our working with Nature's laws, instead of in ignorance.

Sometimes people speak of the conquest of Nature, which seems to me a cruel and insensitive expression. It is by cooperation with her that human life has been made so rich and strong, as compared with that of primitive men and the animals. There seems to be no end to our possibilities along this line. One after another have come the discoveries of fire, the wheel,

textiles, paper, writing, steam, electricity, the train, the motor car, the air-plane, telegraphy and the radio, and no man can predict what will appear next. Not so long ago men paddled canoes on the sea. Then came the invention of the sail, by means of which a man could travel to a considerable extent against a wind which was blowing him away from his goal. But even the most perfect sailing ships were still subject to chance on occasions. When a great storm arose, even though all sails might be furled, there was always the danger of being blown upon the land, for which the master of the ship had no remedy whatever —he could only gaze helplessly at impending disaster. That was the simple life as compared with our modern steamships, but the latter is nearer to Nature because it applies her laws.

In an earlier chapter, I have given lists—such as are prescribed in occult schools—of the physical and emotional rules for the man who is aiming at the life of intuition. In such work this man is only carrying to greater perfection the method of every man in the Hall of Learning—to live according to the laws of Nature. He cultivates himself, not only his steamboats and air-planes. A man in that Hall will obey what he knows of the laws of health, as to eating, drinking, sleeping and so forth. We go but a little further in obeying those laws which make the body more refined and sensitive and attending to emotions

and thoughts as well. Unquestionably in so doing we come into closer touch with Nature, and I have already indicated the way in which the brain and the senses show signs of increased power or enhanced life in consequence of such union. In this we are not making effort of an unnatural kind, notwithstanding the sentiment of a poor woman in England, who said to her friend: "I know 'ow to be a lidy when I want, Mrs. 'Arris, but I likes to be nacheral sometimes."

The upshot of all this is that the man in the Hall of Learning is perfectly willing to give up present pleasures if they are not good, and to put himself to considerable inconvenience and even toil, in order to reach some goal of knowledge and the application of knowledge which he holds steadily before his mind's eye—it may be to achieve something in the domain of literature or art, or to make some discovery or institute some reform of benefit to mankind. The world of his influence may be small or large; it may include only himself, but if so, that is his sphere and he must make it redolent of heaven. It is a mistake to think in this connection that self-culture is not of benefit to others. In a thousand unnoticed ways, from morning till night, the man of culture communicates what he has to other people. The channels of his influences are invisible because they are always pleasant; such a man, like God, does not paint his crest upon his benefactions.

It is not therefore prescribed for the man of will that he shall try to alter other people, but that he shall alter himself, while living a life in the world continuing, of course, work which will lead to benefit for others. So whether he be barkeeper or governor of a State, prince or peasant, he is a power for good, though the name of goodness may not be given to him, and his power may be exercised in such a way that he appears as nothing in the eyes of men. He does not seek to be admired, to be regarded as a hero, even with the unselfish thought in mind that his admirers will be benefited by following him. He can communicate himself without that artificial and dangerous policy, for he drops a million seeds every day, largely without knowing it himself.

The Hall of Wisdom

The man in the Hall of Wisdom is he who looks for and obeys spiritual laws; he lives to serve the purpose of the entire man. No man living in this world is entirely himself. The business of life demands concentration of attention, and therefore, of consciousness. When a man is crossing the street, and looking round to see that the traffic is clear for the moment so as to allow him passage, does he not then suspend thought about his business or social affairs? In physical life we are always crossing the street, and constant attentiveness to its traffic causes men to leave aside a

great part of themselves. So much does this become a habit that they are often unable to live the larger, truer life of the man, and then they marvel at the beauty of the few glimpses which they obtain of it in what is called their intuition. Yet it is their real life, and will become constant some day.

I have elsewhere explained, but must repeat here, that the human body is not a vehicle, and that there is no evolution of material forms. People say that the body is an enabling instrument, because with it we can move about and see and handle things, that it is an observation car, with workshop equipment attached. But it is, in fact, a limiting instrument. It is like a camera. A camera is a dark box. If there is a crack or hole in it, which can admit the least light, no proper picture will be formed. It is a dark box, into which only a small beam of light is admitted through the hole in front, in such a manner that it falls upon the plate or film at the back, which is chemically sensitive to light. The chemicals have nothing to do with forming the picture; they merely record the impression made by the light. The lens in front of the camera also does not make the picture; it simply directs the rays of light to their proper places on the chemical screen. The light carries the picture. If, however, the opening is made large, so that much light is admitted, there will be no picture to be seen on the plate, not because it is not really there, but

because there are too many pictures there. They have fallen upon one another and become indistinguishable.

The body is like a camera; it is a dark place, entering which the man has all his light shut out, but it has small holes (the senses) which admit some pencils of light from the great world, so that a clear though small picture is formed on the screen of consciousness. That consciousness is evolving; as time goes on it becomes capable of exercising greater mental and emotional grasp, of taking in a larger picture without losing its clearness or strength. Possibly the animals have consciousness as clear and strong as our own, but their grasp is narrower. I sometimes think when I look at a fly that its consciousness must be as intense and as clear as mine—what there is of it, for it is exceedingly narrow and simple.

The wise man therefore regards the self that he knows as himself to be only a small part of his true self. He realizes that he has entered the camera to look at certain pictures, to do certain limited things, and therefore to grow by experience. He has concentrated his consciousness and life for a purpose. Instead of looking out in all directions from the perfectly open window of the soul, he has closed all but one of its shutters for the time being, in order to give all the light of his attention to this one thing. That purpose is intended to serve the whole man, not the idol of clay. So in the Hall of Wisdom the man

obeys spiritual laws, which are the laws of the whole.

Welcoming Change

It is a condition of manifestation of will that there should be change, for the will is the faculty with which we alter ourselves—our own thoughts and feelings. Through thought we contrive to modify our material environment; through love we effect other people directly, but with the will we change our thoughts and feelings. Therefore the Intuition of the Will can come only to the man who welcomes change. It is a tendency of the weak man to dread change. He is never happy, because, even when he obtains what he wants, he is in constant fear of losing it. Shakespeare expresses this condition very emphatically in his forty-fifth sonnet. After speaking in the forty-fourth of the effect wrought upon him by the sight of the ruins of past greatness, and reflecting upon the fact that time will come and take his love away, so that he "weeps to have that which he fears to lose," he says:

> Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea,
> But sad mortality o'er-sways their power,
> How with this rage shall beauty hold a plea,
> Whose action is no stronger than a flower?
> O, how shall summer's honey breath hold out
> Against the wreckful siege of battering days,
> When rocks impregnable are not so stout,
> Nor gates of steel so strong, but Time decays?

The poet forgot for a moment that it is precisely the most delicate things which are the most permanent, and of all these perhaps beauty is the greatest. "Everything lasts," said Emerson, "in proportion to its beauty." Many phrases attest this, such as: "A thing of beauty is a joy forever," and "Art alone endures." Every student of geology knows that rivers (which are soft and gentle) are more permanent features of the landscape than mountains (which seem so hard and strong); so is thought able to make matter flow into the shapes of which its delicate imagery is the mold. As William Blake put it:

> He who bends to himself a Joy
> Doth the winged life destroy;
> But he who kisses the Joy as it flies
> Lives in Eternity's sunrise.

The man of will is always ready to meet a new day, because he has his wealth within himself; the tools of his trade are always mobilized. And he knows full well that time and change are friends of the good man; only the evil doer or the voluntary fool has cause to fear the future. An old book says: "Bestride the bird of life, if thou would'st know." This well describes the state of man in the Hall of Wisdom; the man of intuitions lives on the wing, not in a cavern, tent or hut. It is suggestive that the Sanskrit word *kala-hamsa* appears in that sentence. Kala also means time, so there is the conception of the bird

flying through space, that is to say itself living in time. The principle of will uses time for its purposes. Therefore it has no fear of change, and its devotee must live in time, not in place or space. He is at first a "wanderer," but when he has found his powers "a bird on the wing."

An old piece of advice for the development of will was to do every day something which you feel disinclined to do — not something which you *must* do, of course. This involves self-change, and that brings new visions and new opportunities. The man who does not like to change himself fails to preserve a sustained will, for the will is persevering. It keeps its attention on the task; if it does not succeed in one way it does so in another. Without this the man is like a bluebottle on a window-pane. One of the panes of my window opens; the next does not. This morning, on the latter, a bluebottle was vainly trying to escape through the glass into the open air. I had the greatest difficulty to induce him to leave that window-pane and to go over the little barrier of wood to the open window that was so near.

A word of caution is necessary when we speak of self-change. It must not be too radical; in very rare cases may a man alter his type. Follow Lord Bacon's rule: "To do nothing against a man's genius." You do not violate your character, but bring all into line

with that—not neglecting your "general education" but collecting the "something of everything" which that implies and clustering these in service of the "everything of something" at which you aim.

Chapter VI

THE NIRVANA OF EARTH

Every day brings a ship,
Every ship brings a word;
Well for those who have no fear,
Looking seaward, well assured
That the word the vessel brings
Is the word they wish to hear.

Emerson

The Nature of Initiations

Almost all nations have some sort of rites of initiation, when the boy becomes a man and is allowed to exercise his powers amid the circle of his elders. They mark the completion of his elementary schooling, and his entry into manhood. In England and other countries the young ladies used to make their début, after putting in some time at the "finishing school" and perhaps a year or two on the Continent. All this is similar to what takes place in the mind and heart of man. There are special occasions when he suddenly enters into the possession of powers, when his consciousness takes over for its use a portion of his subconscious store of knowledge and faculty. In the learning-period man acquires one thing after another, spends, as it were, some time in each of the rooms devoted to history, geography, mathematics and the rest, and while in those rooms, concentrates upon their

respective subjects, ignoring the other treasures which he has so far stored. He has been preparing to live, but now he lives.

We grow by becoming, but must first pass through such gestation as may be necessary before emerging to the light of day. Thus through the study of astronomy men have come to some conception of the magnitudes of the starry systems, but in the course of that study their own minds have increased in magnitude and power. Men who lend themselves to the appreciation of what is beautiful themselves become beautiful within. And in the knowledge of God, it is only as man allows love to play and expand in his own heart and life that he can begin to ascribe noble love to God. Colonel Ingersoll said that an honest God is the noblest work of man, but as a matter of fact it is not his creation but his discovery. It is doubtful whether man ever creates anything much worth while; all his great works and ideas have been discoveries. The philosopher does not invent truth, but discovers it; the artist does not create beauty, but perceives and produces it. We shall achieve our salvation not by surrounding ourselves by works of art so much as by making our lives beautiful, and true devotion consists not in singing hymns but in making our life a hymn. Our works in the building and production of houses and cities and books are all sacraments—outward and visible signs of an

inward and invisible change. Those who think of art only in terms of the statuary and paintings of our museums and galleries, and ignore the beautiful in common things and daily life, remind me of the Tibetans whom one may see whirling their prayer wheels at Buddha Gaya. They write the prayer on paper, put it in the wheel and then whirl it round, under the impression that much prayer is thus being delivered at the shrine.

Everywhere we find man being elevated by small initiations into a state of conscious life which was not his yesterday. He has not grown into that, but he has grown fit to be admitted over a new threshold into a higher standard of conscious living not known to him before. The flower grows up to a certain point and is ready within the bud; then suddenly it unfolds, expands and blossoms.

Nirvana and Freedom

The initiation to which the will brings a man is that of freedom. He will strive a thousand times to succeed, and without avail, but on the thousand-and-first occasion the wall is gone and he finds himself free and full of power. His first freedom is that of the earth. It is the application of the will to the material world in which he lives. So powerful is that will that there is not a thing on earth, and there is no event which can happen within its bounds, which it may not at

once grasp and polarize to its divine purpose for the man. Then it does not matter to the man what comes, for he is in the position of the Stoic Epictetus, who said: "There is only one thing for which God has sent me into the world, and that is to perfect my nature in all sorts of virtue or strength; and there is nothing that I cannot use for that purpose." Nirvana, literally translated, is a "blowing-out"; what is blown out is understood to be the flame of personal desire. Wishes are gone forever when a man has realized that everything that comes can be used; if it rains the man will have it so; if there is sunshine it is the same; if there are friends he will spend a happy and fruitful time among them; if there are enemies, he will spend a happy time and gain strength by wrestling with them. Thus Nirvana is release from bondage to things; it is freedom.

Nirvana is not negative, because it is the blowing out of the passive part of the man, of his wishing nature. It is properly translated freedom, but it is freedom not from circumstances, but from the bonds with which we have bound ourselves to those states. The man who makes himself strong enough to say, "whatever is, I accept as best" becomes free, because he now lives in the evolution of the soul, not in the comforts of the personality, and he can make use of all things for the purposes of that evolution.

Freedom does not mean that we can do everything that we can imagine, that we can defeat a lion with a slap of the hand. It contains no such aggressive conceptions, when properly understood. People sometimes say that freedom of the will would mean that they could do anything that they wish, when it is those very wishes which restrict their freedom. Strange delusion! Freedom means that we cannot be made to do what we do not want to do, and every man is so free, did he but know and acknowledge the fact.

This is expressed in an old scripture in a particularly illuminative way. It is there said that the wise man is content with whatsoever comes to him without effort. What comes to him without effort means those things which fate brings before him. He may have been born rich or poor, healthy or ailing; he may meet with what men call good or bad fortune—a variety of things come before him not as a result of the work which he is now doing, of his immediate efforts, but "without effort." He is content with this fate. He does not wish that what it brings should be different. But he is not content to leave it as it is.

This sage, it is said, also regards all things in the same way; friends and enemies, gold and clay, are the same to him. But this is not because he regards all things as worthless, as clay, nor because friends are uncertain and perishable, and the earth is full

of misunderstandings; far from it—but because to him clay can be made as useful as gold, an enemy as serviceable as a friend. Nothing can use this man as its slave, because he is free from material desires, and free from resentment, anger, pride, fear, impatience and all their brood; such binding emotions have been blown out like so many candles. The man is free on earth. He has reached Nirvana in this lower world.

Stories appear in Indian books of men who have entered the stage of liberty, and questions arise as to how it is possible for a man to be free while he is still in the body, subject to the circumstances of that body. Well, we have answered the question. He who has understood that answer in his mind will in course of time experience it in his life.

The Occultist and the Mystic

Some measure of this power makes a man an occultist. An occultist may be defined as one who uses the hidden powers in man to find the hidden reality in the world. He employs hidden layers of thought for the discovery of the hidden depths of life. His range of existence is thus greater than that of other men. Inwardly, he is a deep man. Outwardly, he is an explorer, wide in his sympathies, able to see the significance and purpose of events, able to see gold and oil through many layers of common clay.

The occultist is therefore the practical mystic; for the mystic is one who closes his eyes in meditation — with senses quiet but mind active—and so finds truth within. If he then applies that truth in the outer world, he becomes more persistent and more effective than other men. It was always some degree of such mystical vision which made the great explorers in religion and the great discoverers and inventors in the world of practical affairs. On account of this, the youthful Gautama, who became the Buddha, said: "There *must* be a solution to the problem of human pain," and set forth to seek it. Only such vision can make men practical. Those who have it not, sink down in the presence of difficulties and say: "We must submit to this, and endure it as cheerfully and gracefully as we can."

I dislike the distinction between mystic and occultist, which suggests that the former is not practical. If he has seen aright he cannot but be practical, and one word from him can be worth a million words from other men. One happy thought of Edison's brain is worth the day labor of a million men. A mystic like Boehme may spend a lifetime in meditation, and leave us a few wise words—which change the world. There is nothing more absurd than practicality, if by that we mean acting without plenty of thought. I have heard people inveigh against those who give much time to study, and not so much to work for others.

Of course, I know that they are only criticizing those who read for pleasure, for the delights of mental titillation, or for the pride of knowledge, or again, for the name of knowledge, but their auditors may not know that. Enthusiasm of the common kind is equally open to criticism. It is no use bustling around and crying: "Look for the light. Seek the light." Of course we want the light. Yea, we want it as the hart panteth after the water-brooks. But if we are practical occultists, that is to say mystics at the same time, we shall study the laws and find out how the machinery works, like the electrician who wires the building, and when all is ready quietly and without ostentation presses the switch. I cannot understand the mania to be "doing" something, and to despise thinking, which infects and corrupts our age, unless it be that people like the surplus energy of the enthusiast, because they are mostly unconscious vampires.

The occultist or mystic discovers that love also is a power, that while thought can solve all material problems, love can dissolve our social difficulties, for it is only as people develop more and more of the communal sense that collective benefit may result from collective power. We have learnt the value of organization and collective work in the production of material goods; matters are so arranged in a factory that each man's work helps along that of the others,

and dovetails into them like the wheels of a clock. And the results are prodigious. But because the prevalent emotions are fear, envy and jealousy, men fight over these products, though there can be easily ten times more than enough for all. Fish are being thrown back into the sea at Grimsby; and in California, when I was there, huge motor trucks were tipping tons of perfectly good fruits into the Pacific Ocean. This morning's paper says: "An official estimate forecasts the largest cotton crop in the history of the United States. This has caused consternation among the cotton growers." Most people travel miserably in the third class on the railway, when all might easily go first class, and they live in slums and hovels, when each could have a beautiful house with its own lawns and gardens, and every sort of interior comfort, convenience and instrument of culture. All this is not so yet because the communal sense is deficient in the majority, especially in the powerful. When men think of others instead of themselves—in other words, when they have love—all this will come about almost in the twinkling of an eye. We have had different religions, political, industrial and literary revolutions, marking the awakening of intelligence; when the emotional revolution comes, marking the advent of love, the change will be incredibly rapid and far-reaching. When the occultist works for the promotion of love,

he does so as a practical mystic, knowing the law,—not as a sentimentalist.

When intelligence and love—the how of matter and the how of life—thus combine in calm strength, mankind as a whole will receive initiation into a new life. Yet will must also come. And when these three meet and agree in love and unity, mankind as a whole will have entered Nirvana on Earth.

The occultist is thus wide open at both ends. Though outwardly open, he does not dissipate his energy; but guides it with inward vision. Therefore through his life an increasing purpose runs.

The Decline of Pain

One of the fruits of this attainment of the Nirvana of Earth is the decline of pain. The man who has not obtained this freedom lives in the psychological land of pleasure and pain. He vibrates with the vibrations of the body. He is like a man playing a game of chess, and foolish enough to feel that when a pawn or a bishop has been taken by his opponent he himself has been hurt, or when his side gets into a bad position he himself is cramped and badly circumstanced. The hands of such people tremble when they lift a piece on the board to make their move; they are so much immersed in their game. And they lose power.

Men who live in the vibrations of personal life are not really thinking, loving, adventurous men; they are

governed by these sensations which tickle their bodies or their bodily and habitual emotions and ideas. They live to be tickled—not too hard or too much, of course, for in that case pleasure turns into pain. The difference between these two knaves in our psychical court is purely physiological. An extremely cold substance will burn the skin, like a hot one. There is only a certain moderate range of sensation which is pleasant, and the same applies to emotions and ideas of the personality. Some Hindus, in a farwell presentation to a district officer, whom they had much liked, made the grateful remark: "Your heart has always been cool towards us." The European would speak of a warm heart in exactly the same connection. An Indian religious teacher, recommending the life of sacrifice, will say to his disciples: "Step out of the shade into the sunlight, to make room for others." Because these vibrations are physiological and material, we can take them only to a limited extent. You listen to good music with delight; but let it go on for hours and hours and it becomes exquisite torture.

The life of pleasure and pain being thus a life of vibrations, is a material life, inherently mortal. Because of this, the Buddha when asked whether man was immortal, said: "Not the man *you* know." In the same way a certain professor of surgery answered a silly young man in his class, who put the question:

"How long can one live without brains?" The venerable gentleman replied: "Wait and see."

Possessions and Powers

In its completeness the Nirvana of Earth gives release from the bondage of space or things. In this Nirvana you still remain an incoherent and imperfect entity, but your appetites and sensations have been converted into knowledge, and your possessions into powers. The undeveloped man's possessions are not powers but bonds, not causes of freedom but of slavery. He cannot hold them without being less a man. How often one hears that, in America or some other of the newer countries, a young man will not seek above all things to enter on some permanent job in office, store or workshop, or in one of the professions, with the intention of devoting his life thereto, but will become sailorman, motorman, peddler, clerk and what not in its turn, making a success of each, before he settles down. He does not take what he can get and hold on to it, esteeming "safety first" the highest wisdom. He is willing to let one good thing go and try another, for he knows that his wealth is in himself, in his muscles and brain, in his youthfulness, healthfulness and cheerfulness, which will endear him on the instant to others, and throw open a hundred doors of opportunity. But presently he becomes

weaker, acquires responsibility, and must seek a corner and possessions.

We must distinguish between the possessions which are wealth, and those which are not, between the tools of a man's trade and the objects which he gathers round himself for comfort and convenience. The former he uses in his active life, the latter often accumulate upon him like a fungas and gradually stifle him. There are some drawing-rooms and parlors in which one cannot be single-minded, for it is impossible to move from one side to the other, without thinking of fifty things to be evaded. Such things absorb the vitality and prevent work. With some it is wealth of words; they cannot say "yes" or "no," but must pour out a voluminous story whenever you address them, and sometimes when you do not. Such people seldom make good speakers. The great speaker is usually a man rather short of words on ordinary occasions, a poor conversationalist, as the expression goes. Because of this he speaks only when compelled by inner necessity. Therefore his matter is good and he speaks to the point, and he takes some care to use the right word in the right place, so that in time that becomes his habit. Emerson had a great aversion to speak except from written manuscript. He honored his auditors sufficiently to believe that they wanted and deserved his best thoughts, and he well knew that

the inspiration of the chamber was better than the excitement of the platform.

Not infrequently these possessions encroach on the psychic life of their master and hopelessly enslave it, preventing not only good work, as we have just now considered, but also good feeling and good thought. The man becomes agitated so that he cannot think, whenever these precious possessions are in real or fancied danger. I recall one suburban family which, wishing to be considered respectable, collected a certain quantity of silver plate and small art treasures, and kept these is a glass-fronted cabinet in the drawing-room. These people were not rich enough in the post-war days to employ any servants, but they were rich enough to fear burglars, and I heard that it had become impossible for the three or four members of the family all to go out or take a holiday at the same time. If there was something special on at the theatre, one of the party had to be left behind to guard "the silver." I do not think those who went or those who were left ever enjoyed themselves wholeheartedly. I heard, too, of the case of a young lady who was fond of long walks, and was also dainty in her tastes. One day she sank a large portion of her scanty pin-money in a pair of pretty shoes which had captivated her attention through the glass of a shop window. But now she did not like to go for a long walk in them lest they should be soiled, and she was

too logical to enjoy the walk having left them in her wardrobe drawer, so her promenades came to an untimely end!

I suppose one could multiply indefinitely stories of the way in which people are thus enslaved to what they call possessions. The man on the path of occultism comes out of that state. His possessions are all converted into powers; they become tools, instruments of wealth. He takes care not to think about anything which he cannot use for his purpose in life, and, as we have seen, that purpose fills the whole of his life. So what ministers in some definite way to beauty, truth and goodness all at the same time and in harmony, he will own—the rest he will gladly pay some one to take away. He may be enormously rich, he may have vast possessions, but they will be powers to him.

Such a man rarely has a keen sense of ownership. He sees all these things as portions of the great world around him. He has laid his hand on this portion and that portion, to use them, but though in the eye of the law they are his, to himself he does not call them "mine." And as his possessions are not personal, he employs these powers for the benefit of humanity, and in his religious moods will call himself a steward, not a proprietor. The other day I met a little girl whom I knew, and she was carrying a cat. Is that your cat?" I inquired. She rebuked my folly with unconscious wisdom when she demurely replied: "It is mine sometimes."

Chapter VII

THE FIVE FETTERS

> If a man conquer in battle a thousand times a thousand, and another conquer himself, he who conquers himself is the greatest of conquerors.
>
> *The Dhammapada*

Obstacles to Intuition

It appears that intuitions come and go in a spontaneous manner. Yet their coming depends entirely upon certain precise conditions, and there is a definite science in these matters. Unquestionably the "higher self," like the sun in the sky, is shining all the time, and if its light does not penetrate into the personal mind and heart in the form of intuition, it is because of earth-born clouds which obstruct its light. When a man has had some glimpses of the higher light and power, he afterwards wonders why they do not constantly irradiate his life; he feels that they ought to do so, that he should be able to enjoy them when he will; that when there has been so much there should have been more. He feels in some way fettered or bound; he knows that he has wings, but finds that somehow when he flaps them he does not rise. All this is because he is actually fettered or bound by certain defects of his personality. There are five of these fetters on what is sometimes called the ladder's

lower rung; he must deliberately remove them one by one.

The First Fetter

The first fetter is called the delusion of body. This means that the man lives in the belief that he is the body. Since he imagines himself to be a material thing he loses caste as a spiritual being, and enters the ranks of the slaves or careerists. If of the first, he lives in fear, cannot act from his own center, but must forever be watching out to avoid dangers, or to discover what lead someone else is going to give him. If he belongs to the latter he aims to enlarge his personality by the acquisition of property and power. A curious form of this latter defect is sometimes seen in the subtle way in which the personal apes the impersonal, when it enlarges itself in unselfishness. "I am great in unselfishness" it says, and proceeds to make a personal and selfish character out of this virtue. People sometimes "do good by stealth and blush to find it fame" for the enjoyment of blushing.

It is not always the case that men with this fetter still upon them are highly conscious of their personal appearance. There are in fact some persons who have so little thought on this subject that they scarcely know whether they have an aquiline or a pug nose, or are fair or dark. But still they may live in sensation. The stream of life for them is a succession of

bodily sensations; they aim at comfort or pleasurable excitement in body, emotions or mind; their interests are confined to these things. On the other hand there are ladies who use a long mirror every day, and carry a vanity bag constantly, who are very impersonal, whose object is not personal gratification, but the attainment of a good standard of physical life, and the inclination to be a source of pleasure to others, even to those who associate with them only to the extent of seeing them pass in the street. Whenever I see a beautiful lady in the street—and there are many in these days of not too much clothing — I feel deeply grateful to her, and find myself saying "Thank you." And I wish that men, in some way of their own, would let their form of beauty be seen, instead of hiding it in what is surely the most ugly, uncomfortable and unhygienic clothing which the world has ever seen. Their bodies will not be cultivated till this is done; these moldy and moth-eaten objects need to be taken out of their dark and airless boxes, and given a touch of the clean and purifying sun.

To ignore the personal self is as much an error as to deify it. You must give it full attention in your consciousness, and picture in the most unequivocal terms of unrestrained imagination exactly what you would have it be. You must be like a child who has seen something and most intensely wants it, so that for a time it fills your consciouseness, and you say "O'

I want it; I want it; I want it." Do you suppose that the world is going to take the trouble to decide what to give you—whether you shall be dumpy or gracefully tall, rich or poor, vivacious or dull, stupid or clever, beautiful or cross-eyed, bald and bandy-legged, whether you shall have opportunities or not, and on what line? Sometimes people fancy that if they use well what they have they will be given more. It is not quite so; all good comes back, of course, but the genie who brings it also grants you a boon, and you must announce what you will have. Ask for the most lovely body you can imagine in the most perfect surroundings, but do not forget to throw in strong intelligence and an iron will. And overlook no detail, lest you be a hunchbacked beauty or, like King Midas, turn everything into gold. The men and women whom you see around you are pictures painted by themselves —this monkey, that elephant, this mouse, or sheep or deer, that broadside of bacon, this tombstone—the artist has remembered some things and forgotten others. I read a sparkling article some time ago by a gentleman whose name I forget, which was entitled "I don't know Where I'm going, but I'm half way There." He had reached the mature age of thirty-five years! Well, he had better decide; in these matters it is dangerous to trust to chance! Those who do not make up their minds and announce what they want, are living and moving with the inertia of

the past, like a billiard ball which goes on rolling after it has been hit. But this earth of ours is a shop where you must go in, ring the bell, and ask for exactly what you want.

"But," says my puzzled reader, "you told us to give up wishing." Absolutely, for those who wish do not get what they want. I have said before that wishing is weakness. But do not substitute waiting for wishing. You must not wish that anything around you were at all different from what it is, but you must not wait for it to change. Nothing better than the past comes to him who waits.

The Second Fetter

The second fetter is doubt, which must be removed, not by compulsory belief, but by knowledge. The traveler on this road has had some glimpses of intuition, but sometimes on looking back he wonders whether they were true, whether he really only fancied them to have existed; all seems so overcast, surely no sun ever shone. This sort of doubt or uncertainty is sure to come, and there is only one way to remove it—that is by knowledge. Certainly not by waiting. Sometimes people say: "I doubt whether the higher things exist." Then they remain in that state. But you must help yourself to knowledge. He who lives the life shall know the doctrine. Therefore cease to worry about the matter, but provide the conditions

which make direct knowledge possible. Until that is done, the feeling of uncertainty is itself an obstacle to progress.

If you have been at this work for some time, and progress seems slow, doubt not that the fault is your own; there is something wrong with the machinery of your car, not with the principles of its construction nor with the laws of nature. Therefore consider the matter a little and find out what is wrong; remove the defects of your character, one after another. Sometimes it is but a small piece of grit which blocks the flow of power; sometimes it is a lack of will. You must deal with these in the following manner:

1. Sit quietly as in meditation and consider your own character until you find something which you clearly feel to be a defect. Then stop. Do not seek complete knowledge of your defects; do not look for a number of them, but when you have found one—even a small one—stop meditating on the subject, and go and do something against that defect, or in spite of it. And do not meditate again on the subject of your character until you have done that. An illustration of this way of working occurred in the life of a young man whom I knew in India. He found that he was absurdly shy. The same morning it happened that two visitors arrived at the place where we were staying. The young man's first impulse was to avoid them and seek his own room; but he deliberately compelled

himself to approach the strangers and converse with them. I believe that in this one act with his will behind it he removed the fault of shyness from his character once and forever.

Many people talk too much; that is a great waste of time and energy. People who talk much, seldom do their work well—whatever it is. Other possible small defects are those already mentioned—irritability, discontent, envy, anxiety and regret. No doubt you have been at some time in a motor car which vibrates badly when it reaches a certain speed. Some people are like that when they begin to make quick progress; they achieve a certain rate of speed — not perhaps very great—and then begin to vibrate and quiver with qualities like impatience, jealousy, anger, irritability and fear.

I once heard a dream told by a young lady, which illustrates exactly what is required for the removal of doubt by knowledge. She had found herself going along a path up one side of a wooded ravine, when she came to a house, and after waiting a while in the passage which served as a hall, entered a large front room with big windows overlooking the other side of the ravine. There she saw sitting at a table a man of powerful and kindly aspect whom she recognized as a well-known Indian Adept or Master. He spoke to her in a friendly way, and presently took her for a walk up the valley. Then they came to a

flat table of rock of some little eminence, and mounted it, and the Master drew the young lady's attention to a lake which they could see in the distance, which reflected with great perfection the mountains beyond it, and he said: "Make your mind as calm as the surface of that lake, and my thoughts will always be with you." With these words ringing in her ears she awoke.

2. Sometimes it is the will which is lacking, so that obstacles to increase of knowledge remain in the character. You have been making efforts for some time — and conspicuous results do not appear. Then you wilt, when you ought to will. You go slack, and wait for something to happen. You begin to keep your wishbone where your backbone ought to be. But remember the proverb: "Where there is a will there is a way." It is absolutely true. When the will is on duty if you cannot succeed in one way you will try another, until you do succeed, and that will be reasonably soon under these circumstances. It is the function of the will to keep the mind on the job; without that, as soon as a small piece of work is finished, the mind falls back upon some useless thought, or when the mind meets with an obstacle and cannot immediately see what to do next, it dodges into a side channel. But when the will is in operation it keeps your face in the direction in which you want to go, and you soon find a way. It is something like the

action of a stream of water, flowing down a gentle slope of a hill. When it comes to an obstruction the water continues to flow, and banks up against it, until presently it finds a way round it, or flows over it, or washes it away. So should your will go on without change of purpose. If you are not making apparent outward progress your power is then banking up, unless you lose patience, and presently its greater strength will sweep all obstacles from your path.

The Third Fetter

The third fetter is superstition. It is usually assumed that this term refers to religious beliefs. Simple people apply it to others—the religion of another race than one's own is superstition! Next, perhaps, one applies it to one's own religion, and begins to ask onself what part of one's own beliefs are superstition. But superstition is a bigger thing than all this. It means literally the substitution of one thing for another, of the false for the real; or the covering up of a big thing with a little one, as if one should hold a plate between the eyes and the sun and then declare that the sun does not exist or is not to be seen.

Superstition is the enemy of reality, and of breadth of vision. Narrowness and intolerance and false and aggressive humility are some of the defects in character which accompany it. So it behooves the aspirant to be watchful, if not suspicious, of names and forms,

and eager for realities. In the religious life, for example, people sometimes forget that goodness, truth and beauty are the supreme objects, that, as Boehme said, "In some way, Love is greater than God" and that Christ, Buddha, Krishna, are only advertisement signs for these goods. They show these qualities as worn in the highest circles. Let us not forget that, and that God and Christ and Buddha and Krishna are interested in the goods and not in themselves, so that Their personalities are in the last analysis not models and examples for us, who should learn not to worship at a distance, but to stand up and be like Them.

I know not if there be jealous gods, such as Jehovah was said to be, but I know there are jealous worshipers. Some one said: "How you work at your desk all day! How can you keep it up?" I answered: "Madame Blavatsky and Mrs. Besant, whom I admire, did and do so respectively; why not?" "Huh, I suppose you compare yourself with them," was the indignant response. "I have no doubt we are more one than you think," was all I could reply. It seems I had made an enemy by my innocent explanation as to one source of my inspiration to work. I once stayed with a very rich man in a very small state. He lived in a miserable house. "Why this," I inquired, "when you are so well-to-do?" "Ah," he said, sadly, "we must not seem to compete with the Chief."

Among the Buddhists this fetter is described as belief in the necessity for religious rights and ceremonies. That belief was no doubt a great failing of Hindu society at the time when the Buddhist religion was inaugurated, and it needed special mention. But this fetter is really belief in the necessity for anything or anybody in particular. It is belief that anything or anybody outside yourself can either help or hinder you on the occult path. Whatever they are, wherever they stand, *you* must make use of *them* for your purposes. You must tread the path on the initiative of your own will, not only at the beginning, but all the way, and to the very end. In this you will make use of certain things; you will make use of certain teachers. That is what they are there for, to be used in your work for mankind and for yourself. The supposition that outside persons or things can govern our lives to any extent is the greatest superstition. They do not—if you are an occultist. God will not—others must not.

This is well seen in religion, in which every man becomes a mystic when he reaches a certain point. Great numbers of men who would not recognize themselves as mystics are entering into this state, and when they do so they become somewhat conscious that religious teachings exist only for their assimilation. For them the test of truth in any religious teaching is in the answer to the questions: "Does it

make my deepest and broadest thought deeper and broader; does it make my greatest love still greater; does it inspire me to face the adventure of life with increasing purpose?" If it does not do these things it is not truth for the man concerned. Sometimes it has been said that it is useless for the ordinary man to do his own thinking on these lines. It has been asserted that it were wiser for him to trust in those priests and philosophers who have made themselves experts in these matters—to take ready-made opinions from such sources, not to form opinions of his own. But this analogy is both false and dangerous.

There are some things that belong to us in an exterior way, such as overcoats and boots, and these we obtain from expert tailors and shoemakers, but there are other things, even on the material plane, which are within us and can only be acquired by assimilation, such as air and food. If my health is not quite what it ought to be on account of that commonest of all causes, unsuitable food improperly eaten, I might go round to a Health Food Shop and tell my trouble to the man behind the counter, who seems usually to be an expert on these matters. He may advise me to take wholewheat bread, bran, figs and other foods, to eat them at certain times and to masticate them properly. But I shall get health from only by following the last part of this advice—by carrying on the proper assimilative processes of the body. It

would be little use, our merely conversing on the subject of health foods, and certainly I should be a lunatic to ask him to eat the foods on my behalf because he is an expert in mastication.

Similarly it is no doubt a perfectly wise thing to give respectful consideration to the words of men who have taken to the religious life and have become priests or preachers because that is their *métier,* but nothing that they say and no books that they recommend can possibly do me the least good unless I perform the mental and moral, emotional and practical mastication and assimilation.

This truth may be put in another way. Religious knowledge, like every other sort of knowledge becomes ours through thinking or mental assimilation. How can men worship God when they have no conception of God? They may think that they do so, if they are sufficiently hypnotized by custom; but sometimes they awaken from that state to find that they have been worshiping an imaginary being who really has many of the attributes of a demon. I may illustrate this point with a little story. I was traveling once with a gentleman who was a priest of a very narrow sect. He told me that he believed in what most of us are now accustomed to call "the old ideas" of heaven and hell, and invited my opinion on the subject. I asked him whether he really believed that the majority of men were destined for eternal torment, and only a

few for happiness in heaven. He replied, "Yes." I then said that it seemed to me that he, being a priest and a good man, would probably go to heaven, but that it might happen that someone whom he loved, such as his mother or brother, might go to hell. He said it was not unlikely. Then I asked: "But how could you possibly be happy in heaven, knowing of the suffering of the people you love, or indeed of anybody?" For a little time he appeared nonplussed, but presently his face brightened as the answer came into his mind, and he said: "It will be all right. God will make it acceptable to me." I then told him, rather brutally, perhaps, that for some time I had no respect for his ideas of heaven and hell, and now I had none for his conception of God, who apparently had no use for love and the better class of human feelings generally.

Here was a man who had tried to take his religion on faith, as the expression goes (though he had a complete lack of faith in the best things known to man). He dared not think, and had so little respect for love that he could find no use for it in his immortal state. The simple fact is that this gentleman was worshiping a devil, an evil being (imaginary, fortunately), though he did not know it, and called it "God."

Every man who claims to be religious, but does not use his thought in matters of religion, does not give free play to high ethical emotions, does not live

practically with confidence in the divine government of this world as God's school for man, is in some degree in the same position as that unfortunate religious cripple. He is not willing to improve his knowledge of God through the use and development of his own faculties.

How absurd it is then for a man to accept his father's or grandfather's religion, as if it were some external thing, like a hat or a pair of pantaloons. It is true that some of the churches have tried to keep men in this position, but the result has been that religion has gone outside those churches. People like H. G. Wells and Bernard Shaw think more about God than most churchmen do, and when it comes to the ethical side of religion, to the way in which one human being ought to deal with others in the complexities of our modern life—it is the thousands of better-class novels of our day which treat of that subject: they explore the whole region of ethics, and offer diverse material for the average man's thought.

Once a man has said to himself: "Henceforward I accept and respect as religious teaching only that which can make my deepest thoughts deeper, my warmest love warmer and my willingness to face the affairs and the work of life stronger" he becomes a member of the one religion in the world. Little as he may realize it at first, he has become a mystic. It is now only a question of time before he will begin to

find that in this life he is being taught in two ways—through tuition and intuition. Having accepted the outward tuition which the world offers in the spirit of truth, love and exploration, he begins to be aware of a great intuition coming to him from within on account of his increasing contact and harmony with the mind and heart and life behind all things. Flashes of insight and illumination irradiate his mind; the sphere of his interest and affection broadens out suddenly and immensely; he feels inward strength and power such that no material disaster can shake him. Now he knows by direct experience the truths which history and philosophy support, that "God builds his church in the hearts of men, on the ruins of creeds and religions," and "There is no bar or wall in the human soul where God, the cause ceases, and man, the effect, begins."

I imagine that the gods are so shy of approach to us because we may make use of them to hinder instead of to help ourselves. Seeing their splendid powers some people would say: "I can *never* be like that!" True it is that the aspirant must have abundant admiration and reverence for those who are to him visible great and good; but he must not be content with the name of goodness, he must examine it and see if it be really good. For if he does not feel the superiority and bow before it in glad and grateful recognition it

means that he has not seen it, however fully he may have accepted any proclamation of its presence.

Others, erring on the opposite side, block their own way with pride, which involves voluntary ignorance. There are youths who think themselves clever; it is because they have never seen cleverness, and do not know what it is. They have seen and perhaps acquired some petty fragments of knowledge, and as they do not look upwards, but only downwards, or at themselves, they think themselves clever. So, unquestionably, bounding and unrestrained admiration, reverence, even worship, will fill the heart of the occultist; but at the same time his intellect will be crystal clear, his eye cold as ice; he will see that the desire of the Master is not that he should lie down in an abasement of unreasoning devotion, but that he should stand up beside Him. The Master is like a father who wishes his son to be a man like himself, and as good as himself. So devotion must not, as in common men, sweep all before it like a stream in spate, destroying the will with which alone we can tread the path, and the clear crystal intelligence that should see by what means and methods the passage is to be won. Truly there are elder brothers and younger brothers, helpers and helped, but all one family of brothers, and the helped help the helpers and the younger the olders, just as in a family the

intelligent parents learn as much from the children as the latter do from them.

The practical occultist is and must be master in his own house, able to govern it with strength and calmness. His philosophy does not follow the popular dichotomy which makes a man think of "myself and the world around me." He divides the universe in two places, into three sections: "Myself, *my world* and the world." What people commonly call their life he may sometimes speak of as his game. There are many games going on in this huge world. Each man plays his own; each has taken possession of certain things and arranged them in a certain way; he sits as it were with a chess-board before him and the game is in progress. For the occultist the great question every moment is: "What must be my next move?" Nothing else matters, for it is all outside his game, and beyond his power. But he will play his game like a calm, strong man, who is not anxious, because he is willing to win or lose—willing that his pieces should go down in the battle—and he knows perfectly well that if the game is well played, whether he wins or loses, he will be stronger for the next game. He does not identify himself with his position or his pieces on the board; he uses them in the game, that is all.

In life, such a man lives by principles, not by rules. All the commandments of all the religions, all the

customs of societies, mean nothing to him. They are merely rules. But he follows the living law of the higher self—the principles of will, love and thought —which make a new rule for every experience and event, and one that cannot go amiss from virtue. This does not mean that he is angular and disagreeable. On the contrary, because of this independence he thinks always, and he can often see the value of present fashions in dress, in manners, in social usage, when others cannot. If he conforms to society he has a good reason for it; if he flouts convention he has a good reason for that also. He does nothing because of merely outside considerations, and he does nothing by halves. He does not force his aims to fulfilment, like a bull charging a gate, but considers the weaknesses of others, as a wise architect respects the properties and weaknesses of his various materials. So he may on occasions follow the oriental proverb:

> Before thou hast forded the river, O brother,
> Revile not unduly the crocodile's mother.

The Fourth and Fifth Fetters

There are two more fetters which bind a man while he is still upon the ladder's lower rung, and will trouble him to some extent until he has completed that stage. They may be described as prejudice for and against certain things and persons, preconceived opinions in

favor or to the contrary, or simply the possession of strong likes and dislikes. His attachment to the ideals of truth, goodness and beauty, are not in this class. He aims to fill his every thought, word and deed with these qualities, and to propagate them in the environment and lives of others. He knows perfectly well that they are not sentiments but powers, which can give both internal happiness and external prosperity to him who has them. They are not predilections; they are life as opposed to matter; they are divine architecture as opposed to ruin.

Tomatoes first came into vogue in England when I was about five years old; I remember well a conversation between my father and mother on the subject of this new fruit; one of them was rather averse to its use and said, "I dislike the taste of it." But now it is regularly on their table, and they like it, though they still speak of their liking as an acquired taste. All tastes are acquired tastes. That is what the prejudiced man forgets.

I once knew a person who was constantly ailing, because—it appeared to me—of a dietary ill-advised both as to quantity and kind. On being asked for advice, I offered a modest opinion on the subject. "But" came the indignant reply, "I like my present food, and I do not like what you suggest. Do you not know that if we take what does not give us relish it will not be well digested?" My lips were silent in the

face of so much prejudice, but in the impersonality of this printed page I can record what I thought. I would have said: "Madame, you should alter your tastes, and your mind first of all." The new fashions in dress or music also look queer, but in a few months their beauty will be seen; they reveal something, and we must take each lesson in rotation. I have no doubt the large eye of a god could see in the procession of human caprices (even in those of civilized mankind) a time-table as perfect as that drawn up in any high school or college.

In removing these fetters the wise aspirant will permit the energy and power of love to do its own work. He need only be obedient to divine impulses. In his work for others as a karma yogī he disregards his former likes and dislikes, and soon discovers that they had a poor foundation, and that many things from which he shrank are equally good. If we may symbolize this divine and inner love as the Christ, the true disciple soon learns to give all that he has to the poor and follow Him. It is in the following that all is given or used, as is indicated in *The Bhagavad-Gita,* when Krishna says that the greatest sacrifice which man can offer is that of wisdom. You do not lose your wisdom in employing it for the benefit of others, which is the work of God, but you make it sacred or holy, as the word sacrifice implies.

Chapter VIII

THE NIRVANA OF THE SOUL

As a mother, even at the risk of her own life, protects her son, her only son, so let him cultivate good will without measure, towards the whole world, above, below, around, unstinted, unmixed with any feeling of differing or opposing interests. Let a man remain steadfastly in this state of mind all the while he is awake, whether he be standing, walking, sitting or lying down. This state of heart is the best in the world.

The Metta Sutta

Such a one remains like the broad earth, unvexed; like the pillar of the city gate, unmoved; like a pellucid lake, unruffled. For such there are no more births. Tranquil is the mind, tranquil the words and deeds of him who is thus tranquillized, and made free by wisdom.

The Dhammapada

For a Sage who is seeking yoga, action is called the means; for the same Sage, when he is enthroned in yoga serenity is called the means.

The Bhagavad-Gita

The One Road

We have seen that the man who attains the Nirvana of Earth learns to understand the world and its purpose as a perfect school for man, and therefore he comes to love that world, and find new meanings and new riches everywhere. In the same way the man who attains the Nirvana of the Soul understands the moods of life around him, in the souls of others, because he loves them. There is but one road to the

path—says *The Voice of the Silence,* and that is love. Love is the direct knowledge of life. It is the source of our life and the cause of its existence. Love admits to the soul of others, multiplies our life in other's lives, enlarges our experience, and grows with use. Once more we know by becoming. Still, the earth was a place of anxiety and bondage until the will with its knowledge of the self stepped in and brought peace. And once more the world of the soul, the place of love, has its anxieties, until the will does the same thing again. Let us examine these things.

The Vision of Life

With the gradual removal of the five fetters, our consciousness, freed from interest in mere forms, has changed over, and become intent upon life. To us now, as we look at events of nature and the affairs of men, it is the indwelling evolving life that matters. We find no difficulty in believing in the immortality of the life which is conscious in the forms around us, because we know its power. Scientists say: "The world is full of forms and these are constantly changing, but the ultimate matter or natural real objective substances of which these are built, as a house is built of bricks, do not change; they are eternal, immortal. Here are chairs, tables, books, articles of clothing, houses, trees, animals and human bodies—it is all the same old material which existed in other

forms a thousand and a million years ago, and will present itself in new appearances a thousand and a million years from now. It is not created and destroyed as the forms come and go."

But we are equally confident with regard to life. We are very conscious of the life operating in various creatures, exerting its mysterious qualities and instincts, intent upon self-preservation, then upon self-expansion, and finally—when it has come to know itself as a spiritual being and has given its allegiance to human ideals—upon perfection. We say: "Do not imagine that all this life which is constantly changing its form is being created and destroyed. It does not die, neither is it born. The life that is here now as oak or weasel or elephant or man was here a thousand and a million years ago in other forms, and will be present in new forms a thousand and a million years hence."

I read the other day in the newspaper of two terrible accidents—a train smash in Australia, in which several carriages were telescoped, and some people were crushed to death beyond recognition, and a fire at a cinema show which was being held in an old barn in Ireland. These were unquestionably dramatic horrors which only those who were present could fully realize. But even in these the occultist will look at the life rather then the form. The bodies are destroyed; there is pain—though not nearly so much as

would appear — but the life goes on its way, startled perhaps by the unexpected change, but still immortal, not to be harmed at all, nor to be impeded in its evolutionary purpose, by earth, water, fire or air.

An observer, living in the form, thinking of himself as "it," of others as "it" (because he confuses the life and the body, and the body is truly material, is "it") is distressed with sympathy of a material kind. He imagines what he would feel if he as a body were to be wrecked in that way; he is horrified most of all at the irremediable disfigurement and dismemberment of that material "myself." He is saying to himself, unconsciously: "It might have been I." But the occultist sees more of the life and is less blinded by the form. Even in such a situation he will ask like Epictetus: "What use can I make of this for the purposes of the soul?"

Do not regard this as an impossible perfection of practical philosophy. It is that to which every soul will come sooner or later as the result or experience. It is the simplest wisdom, the deep soul-fruit of all experience, which the man of intuition brings to the surface of his consciousness, which in premonitory form, as I have related, was sometimes thrust outward from within the consciousness of a soldier. All experience results in such wisdom. Some of it is seen in the high estimate of value which aged persons often place upon the experiences of their youth.

The materialism of the common man which thus appears in dramatic events of danger and terror is equally evident to the observer in daily life. A man thinks of others chiefly as bodies, as things, though animated things; his opinions about them are formed upon the way in which they happen to affect his own life and plans—*his* pleasures, efforts and successes. He looks on life as upon a comfortable chair; he merely likes, for he has not risen to love. But the occultist comes to feel the life in his neighbor; he recognizes him perpetually as another consciousness, feeling, thinking, willing, evolving, rejoicing in increase of inward power, embarked upon a career which is bound to be triumphant, in which all incidents, even birth and death, are but so much material for use. And as such sympathy for the life increases, and sentiment for the form declines, all this becomes as a game on the board for others, as it is a game for himself. He sails on the waters of material existence; he is not of those who are immersed, who rise and sink, and pant and struggle, and are full of distress. He therefore becomes incapable of selfishness at second hand, which is a fault of many good people who would be ashamed to be selfish on their own account.

All this can be expressed in terms of planes of matter, as some clairvoyants put it. This physical world is the densest plane, the most material, but it

contains some appearances of life. Some of it is seen in the consciousness of men, less in animals, and less in plants; but there is some of it in everything, even in mineral substances, as has lately been proved in a scientific way by the distinguished Hindu physicist, Sir J. C. Bose. Carry your sight to the next plane, the "astral" or emotional; there is more life, the matter is less dominant. Go further inwards to the mental plane, which is so called because its matter is immediately responsive to thought; there life-activity is far more evident, though still matter predominates a little. That plane is the limit of human personality; beyond it, in the next grade of matter thus to be observed, we come to the region of human immortality; and now in the "higher mental plane" there is a little more life than matter, if I may so express it. Next comes the buddhic, and beyond that the Nirvanic plane. Here the landscape is made of consciousness; matter or forms must be sought for, as men have to seek for life down here. Yet all these taken together are one world of life and matter mingled, and on the whole equally.

The Pleasures and Pains of Love

There is a proverb which says that even the ambitious man desires that his son should outshine him One who loves can enjoy the success, prosperity and happiness of others even more than his own. If he were the enjoyer his pleasure would be tinctured with

regret that others were denied it; but now he enjoys it without that regret. Such love casts out fear, for himself, and also envy, jealousy and pride. It is a source of satisfaction to him to learn that another is his superior. "For," says he, "I am what I am, whatever others may be, and the more there are who are above me the better it will be for humanity."

But this genius of love has his sorrows too. His love is a great energy, which makes him liable to be impetuous, to involve himself in too many complicated affairs, to start enterprises which he cannot afterwards keep going, or which travel into lines which he has not intended. Also, as he rejoices in the happiness of others, he sorrows with their sufferings; though in so far as he has attained the Nirvana of Earth for himself, he can apply the same philosophical process to the lives of others. He can affirm that what comes to them also is to be accepted and used with contentment, and is in fact the best that could be.

Still the time process of the soul remains for him a matter of anxiety. He is eager for progress; he works for the betterment of others, and of himself as one of them, in whom their gain is involved. He knows life as well as the world, so in his mind knowledge and love have completely joined hands. They are "twins upon a line." He has found knowledge satisfying and powerful in the region of things which exist

in space; he has found love satisfying and powerful in all matters relating to the consciousness of others; but the purpose of it all still eludes him. He is content to be a point in space, because he knows he is a center without a circumference, but he is immersed in the time process; he is not free, and he wants freedom for himself and others.

He deals with other men as souls, trying to benefit their evolving consciousness, but it seems to him that people do not take their opportunities; they linger in misery and are too slow in accepting the glorious and happy destiny to which they are called; they will play the clumsy clown and abuse and hurt themselves, when they are rightfully gods. He would like to protect the people from themselves, to do their thinking and their work for them. He is so much at one with them he fancies that that is service. But the law will not permit it; each man must win his own freedom, as he eats his own food. In the lower stage he has learnt that desire is sorrow. Now he has to learn that this wonderful love which is giving him new life is itself a desire, of a higher kind—the desire of life instead of desire of form. As before he thought that freedom on earth was escape from a center or position in space, now he imagines that his freedom and that of his friends involves escape from their positions in time. He has to learn that this is not so.

The Place of Peace

When he steps upon the ladder's upper rung he will attain a new freedom, achieve the Nirvana of the Soul, enter the place of serenity and peace. He will realize that there was some inversion in his previous vision of one life dwelling alike in all beings. He now sees that all souls are dwelling in one being, that they are parts of that one over-soul, and each is in its rightful place, as so many hands and feet. And each is in its rightful place not only in space, but also in time. In the earlier stage we discovered that one position in space is as good as another, one set of circumstances as acceptable for our purposes as another; now we see clearly that one position in time is as good as another, that it does not matter where anyone stands in the long procession of souls in evolution.

This peace of the second Nirvana does not involve inactivity, although it is a place of peace. It is a manifestation of the will, free not only from the material desires which enslave a man to earthly possessions and positions, but also from the spiritual desires which bring anxiety concerning the evolution of those whom he loves. Now he becomes a calm, strong ruler of men, unseen, giving a touch only when necessary. It is the man whose hand is lightest on the steering-wheel who has most control of the machine.

He who knows the psychology of lions can play with them without danger.

Those who have reached this and higher points do not waste sympathy in idle sentiment. Sometimes people are suprised and angry because the occult teachers do not show more eagerness to assist us and push us on. The fact is that they know full well that they cannot do so until we have gone out of our world or state into theirs. They are ready enough to help every one who does so, but will not pluck unripe fruit, nor try to open roses before their time. I ask: "Have you developed your will and used it as prescribed in the earlier part of this book? If not, expect nothing. If you have, you will be rewarded with interior communications."

The Seven Sounds

The influence of the will which declares these truths of our destiny becomes increasingly powerful, and has been symbolized by mystics in various ways. There is a poetical statement in *The Voice of the Silence* which tells what happens to the aspirant while he is in process of getting rid of the five fetters:

> Before thou sett'st thy foot upon the ladder's upper rung, thou hast to hear the voice of thy inner God in seven manners. The first is like the nightingale's sweet voice chanting a song of parting to its mate. The second comes as the sound of a silver symbol of the Dhyanis, awakening the twinkling stars. The next is as the plaint melodious of the ocean-sprite imprisoned in its shell. And

this is followed by the chant of the vina. The fifth like the sound of bamboo flutes shrills in thine ear. It changes next into a trumpet blast. The last vibrates like the dull rumbling of a thundercloud. The seventh swallows all the other sounds. They die, and then are heard no more.

These sounds form an ascending series in both intensity and volume. It is said in France, and no doubt the same thing has been observed in other countries also, that the nightingale arrives some days or weeks before its mate. What we usually hear is his song of welcome to her, and joy in her company, and in life generally. It is then full-throated enough. But he must have parted from her to make the journey from the south, and most of us can only imagine the delicate tone of his remarks at that time, with which no doubt the ancient poet was acquainted. Each sound is conceived as of increasing power. The vina of Indian lute; has still a very sweet and delicate sound, but it is penetrating. Finally there is the rumbling of the thundercloud, which seems to fill all the earth and sky.

All this is metaphorical and symbolical. As time goes on, and the aspirant pursues his unchanging purpose, the voice from within, which at first was so delicate that he had to stand on the tiptoe of breathless expectancy in order to catch its divine message, becomes constant and ever-present. His day is full

of its sound, which fills every valley and echoes from every hill. There is then not one small event in his life, not the picking up of a pin or the tying of a shoelace, which is not lighted with spiritual significance. Every incident in the newspaper becomes an epic; every dusty corner in a slum is a world filled with wonders. Every small thing, every small action has become divine, far reaching, universe-shaking. All things have become new, and filled with light.

And his consciousness is also new, as though it had gone through fire and come out burnished gold. Where it was like a black veil moving before his eyes, with occasional rents of waking life, now it has become perpetual light. The world is now living, not material. Formerly you awoke now and then, to find that you had been living dead. Now you live in the whole universe; all is within you, and you contract yourself out of that to speak with persons, to attend to their particular affairs, for you have none of your own. It is as though all the universe were within yourself, and in a quick smooth act of will you push out and make separate from yourself the man who speaks to you and to whom you must reply. You live in the unity and you create the universe of separate things anew for each act. In time this state becomes constant. You forget your old condition, as men and women forget that they were children. And sometimes it

takes a moment's effort to remember and realize that others are still in the state which you have left behind.

The Power of Inattention

There is one method not yet mentioned by means of which the full power of attention may be concentrated upon the Voice of the Silence. It is the practice of inattention. It comes naturally as the fetters are being worn away, but the process can be accelerated by knowledge of what is taking place, and an occasional judicious experiment.

The Nirvana of the Soul comes through the power of will applied to life and love. The will is that faculty with which we pay attention; it is therefore the power which links consciousness and matter together. When you are reading a book, or listening to music, or looking in rapt attention at a beautiful object, you become inattentive to all but that in which you are interested. Somewhat similar to this is the "brown study" into which people sometimes fall, but it is not the same, because it is often passive. In all such cases many things are battering on the senses; a person may enter the room and go out again, a tram-car may go howling and screaching and thundering past, but you have not seen or heard. Vibrations from these things entered the eye and ear, and the messages traveled along the nerves to the appropriate

centers in the brain, but you did not see or hear, because your attention was turned away. How vibrations of matter in the brain are converted into sense-perceptions in consciousness has always been a mystery to the psychologist—but at this point there is not only the mystery of knowledge, but also the mystery of will. That translation of vibrations into perceptions is distinctly within the power of our will, and the time comes when we can choose not to attend to that which is not required for the business in hand. You can then concentrate, meditate, think out a problem, make observations, with persons around you working or talking, moving about and making a noise. This is practical under almost all circumstances, even in a New York subway express, or at some place where steel riveting is going on.

This faculty involves a certain agreeable sympathy with all that is taking place, an absence of anything like impatience, irritability, discontent and criticism, so that only an unexpected shock can disturb it, and not even that unless it is quite violent. It also involves control of the emotions, so that when you choose you will not be interested in the conversation of others, or in the meaning of surrounding sounds and sights. Further, it requires control of mind, so that it will not be inclined to stray from the chosen object of thought.

A man whom I know tried recently to see whether he could ignore the sound of a trio of musical instruments, including a bassoon and an oboe, which were being played close to him and were intended to fill a moderately large hall full of people with their sound. He was sitting on the platform, and this music was preliminary to a lecture which he had to give. It was good and beautiful music, the kind which he enjoyed, well-chosen by the promoters of the enterprise to draw people to the lecture, in the hope that he would be able to keep them there afterwards. There was a point on which he wished to speak which he had not sufficiently thought out, so he turned his attention to it while the music was going on, and deliberately turned his attention away from the music. The result was that after a moment or two he heard the sounds no more, and was able to examine and clear up his problem as though he had been alone in his room or in the depths of a forest.

Such power of inattention materially helps in the hearing of the Voice of the Silence. It is well that one should not only listen for it, but also learn to turn attention away from other things at the time. I recall a good example of this related to me by my father, who was at one time a sailor, in the old sailing-ship days. Sometimes in slightly stormy weather, a man up in the shrouds would shout down to a man on the deck. The second man would try to hear but

could not do so, because of all the noises made by the wind and waves. He would then go into a little cabin on the deck and shut the door, and now he could hear what the man aloft was saying. No doubt all the various sounds were still heard in the same proportion as before, but as the beating of the heavier sounds had ceased, the finer could be heard also, although still more delicate than they were before. I have noticed too, that radio messages coming from a loud speaker at a time when there is much "wailing and gnashing of teeth" can be heard more distinctly if you put your fingers firmly in your ears.

This power of inattention may also be employed deliberately for the realization of life. At times you may take a living object or person for meditation. You will concentrate your attention upon him, and then deliberately exclude his material aspect from your vision, with all the forces of the mind drawn together trying to realize by feeling the life within.

Chapter IX

THE NIRVANA OF THE SELF

Time, you old gipsy man,
Will you not stay,
Put up your caravan
Just for one day?

Hodgson

Then dawns the Invisible; the Unseen its truth reveals;
My outward sense is gone, my inward essence feels;
Its wings are almost free—its home, its harbor found,
Measuring the gulf, it stoops, and dares the final bound.

Emily Bronte

Fear no more the heat o' the sun,
Nor the furious winter's rages;
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages.

Shakespeare

The Fetters of the Soul

As a man must perfect the Nirvana of Earth by the removal of five fetters from his own limbs, so must he perfect the Nirvana of the Soul by the shaking off of five more. His entry into that state will give him deep, strong peace, but this comes and goes, and is not proof against great blows in the world of love until it is perfected, when its peace will govern the whole of life. Such peace is only another name for knowledge of the Self, of which will is the expression. These five fetters on the ladder's upper rung are forms of attachment to states of consciousness, not to matter

and bodies. They are fetters of the soul, not of the bodies, and arise from within. The first two fetters are attachment to life, whether in form or formless, that is to say, attachment to any limiting object of love. Nothing less than unity with the whole is the goal of our life. We must realize that the whole is reflected in each, so that looking at each one we see that which alone gives reality to it.

The Philosophy of the Whole

There are no particulars in the world. Everything derives from the whole, which is itself integral, and is not built up of parts. Practically all the philosophers of our day stultify themselves at the outset by the tacit assumption that there are particulars in space and time. But all things are parts of a whole, like leaves upon a tree. The tree is not made of leaves; you do not find them without a tree. In body and in mind we also find that each one of the realities which we know is somewhat in the place of such a leaf. A table is what it is because it stands where it is, and occupies space in a certain manner; but for that it depends not upon itself. It performs its functions because it stands upon the earth. The earth, a larger body, has its position in space because the other celestial bodies exert their forecs of attraction upon it. It is where it is because of celestial gravitation, as the table stands on account of the gravitation of the

earth. It is only the totality of material things which can be regarded as self-sustaining, that is to say, as possessing the attributes which men usually ascribe to the particular. Similarly in logic, it is the universal premise in the syllogism upon which the argument rests; it is only because we have some dim knowledge of the nature of everything, a conception of the whole, that some new piece of information can be acquired. In the theory of knowledge we know one object by its comparison with others, by an observation of its resemblances and divergences from them in various characters; so at last we know that thing only because we know the whole.

This is true also in the region of life and love. We look at others and say, "You, and you, and you," but these are not particulars of life. Each consciousness, that is, each object of love, is like a leaf on the tree of universal consciousness, from which it derives, and all of its powers and possessions depend upon the great all of consciousness, as the table rests on the ground. Every one depends upon others; all are one.

Pride and Agitation

The third and fourth fetters are named pride and agitation—pride in the powers of consciousness, agitation from the outside on account of love insufficiently controlled by will. This agitation is not of the nature of material vibration, but it distorts truth. A crude

form of it is sometimes seen when for example a teacher hears that something good has been said or done by one of his pupils of whom he is especially fond. At once his face lights up, he is pleased; the matter is highly important; the pupil must be congratulated and perhaps rewarded. He does not remember that the same thing has been better said and better done many times before, and within his knowledge, by others. So he is agitated, moved from outside, diverted from truth, because he has ignored the fact that the same life is equally dwelling in all—his imperfect love has led him to recognize the self in one place and not in another. The function of intimate personal love, we know, is to concentrate and stimulate the feeling and its power; but after concentration comes expansion, and we must extend to the whole that lesson which we have derived from the part.

Ignorance

The fifth fetter is ignorance. Knowledge alone gives the fullest liberty. The use of the will is an assertion of the knowledge of the Self. It is knowledge of the Self which must next be acquired, and when that is done, the Nirvana of the Soul will have been brought to its perfection, and in the fullness of its peace, a new and higher Nirvana will be attained, the Nirvana of the Self. When this is reached the man will realize:

"I am not my consciousness." It is true. Not even that best consciousness which comes in the intuitions, not even that glorious life which is filled with intuition, is the reality which is the goal of our life.

This truth is hard to explain. "Can there be anything beyond consciousness, and better than consciousness?" you ask. Yes, it is I. And the following is the meditation for this realization. Looking at the body of another you rank it as an object in the world. You can say: "It is well; it is strong; it is active." You keep your own body in the same class, and use the same words. Then, looking at your neighbor's consciousness, you can say: "You are thoughtful; you are wise; you are loving; you are strong-willed." But looking at your own consciousness you say: "I am thoughtful; I am loving; I am strong-willed." Why this difference? Do not these two consciousnesses belong to one class, as do the two bodies? You must look at your own consciousness and say quite naturally: "You are thoughtful; you are loving; you are strong-willed." *You,* not *I*—for that is the solemn and simple truth. It is *no* object; it is a living being, but it is you not I. The you is evolving but the I is not. As the body is in space, so is the you in time. But I am beyond time. Do not try to *think* of I, do not try to know it, as understanding, or loving or willing. Be I. Contemplate yourself as body, as consciousness, as I. Then by the process of inattention

drop the body and the consciousness, the "it" and the "you," and remain the I.

This is no artificial or metaphorical I. It is the I which each one of us means every day when he says "I." Though he may mistakingly identify it with his consciousness and even with his body, it is the pure I with which he makes that error and says "I" in those things. There is a real God behind the idol. In the pure I state you will be the same I as ever, and will discover also that there is but one I in all the universe. When that is known in yourself it opens out into the fullness of all.

One method of visualizing the realization of the Self is as follows: Think of your consciousness as covering in each one of its acts of attention a certain space of time. The present to it has some content of past and future. Next consider that this time-size of consciousness increases with its growth or evolution. If we then symbolize the line of human progress as a measure twelve inches long, the consciousness having progressed three inches may be, let us say, one inch long, but when it has advanced to the twelfth inch mark it has itself grown long enough to cover the entire measure. Then the whole of what seemed to be time will be one supple fact, like the whole of a body, and as the Self uses the whole at once, not a part, he is not bound by time. Imagine a tiny insect crawling up a man; first he finds a foot; much later a knee,

and so on. He has not enough memory to link these together, but with what little he has he says: "The world is constantly changing its form—last year it was like a foot, this year it is like a knee." But to the man the body is all one, and when he wants to act he will think himself into hand or foot or jaw.

Premonitions of the Nirvana of the Self

There are some premonitions of this state which may come to any of us. I knew a lady who has traveled a great deal who told me (what others also have observed) that it is always a matter of wonder to her how anything can go on in its usual way in her absence. She had been away from her home . . . for some years. She gazed at it and at the people living and busy round about: "What a curious feeling I have," she said, "I cannot understand how all these people have been going on just the same in my absence. It seems as if that could not be. Yet they are here, and it must have been so."

"The explanation is simple," I replied. "The deepest part in you, the I, never went away and never came back."

"Yes, it does seem also," she said, "as if I had been here all the time, as if I had not been away."

It is the whole in me that says "I," and the same gives reality to the world, for the whole of matter and

the whole of consciousness have each the character of that self-existent One.

Another premonition is that which makes discontent without position in the scale of being. The feeling of unfairness which comes to an ego when the finds himself placed below others in the procession of life is natural and deep-seated. It appears because the I is unique, and refuses classification, and men rightly worship that I. The place in time is accepted in the Nirvana of the Soul, because it is the will of the I, but at this higher stage the man discovers the truth and says: "I am not in the procession at all, though my consciousness may be there. I am not in the series, but am using a conscious instrument which is in the time-extension." For this reason it is never permissible to try to organize the lives of others. It is an offense against the highest divinity in each man, and he does right to resent and struggle against this interference. Yet mothers-in-law and other people do it, with perfectly kind, though ignorant intentions.

It is because of this I that all things have reality for us. It comes forth and takes possession of some portion of consciousness and develops it as "my consciousness," and of portions of matter, which become "my bodies." So the same I remains throughout the changing states of matter and consciousness, as everyone feels. It is this I which individualizes and particularizes things. Each object seems to be I; a mere

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